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# BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

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REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO  
CONSIDER THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN  
IN AGRICULTURE IN ENGLAND AND  
WALES.



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## BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

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### REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

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#### CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.

*1. Appointment and terms of reference.*—In August 1916 the Reconstruction Committee of that date appointed a Sub-Committee known as the Women's Employment Committee, which was continued as a Committee by Dr. Addison, M.P., when he became Minister of Reconstruction in 1917. This Committee was instructed to consider and advise, in the light of experience gained during the war, upon the opportunities for the employment of women, and the conditions of employment in various occupations, including agriculture, after the war. The Committee which comprised several members acquainted with agricultural conditions, considered the opportunities of employment, with their attendant conditions. The question of the employment of women in agriculture appeared to them to differ fundamentally from that of the industrial workers in other trades under consideration, inasmuch as agriculture draws largely, not upon the general industrial pool of women's labour, but upon the part-time services of the wives and daughters of farmers, small holders and labourers resident in the locality.

Such conditions appeared to require special investigation, and two conclusions were reached—(1) that the ground which the Women's Employment Committee desired to cover with regard to agriculture had not been covered by any previous inquiry, or by their own inquiry; (2) that the Women's Employment Committee, by its constitution, was not the most suitable body to conduct the inquiry.

It was accordingly decided that the Committee should approach the Ministry of Reconstruction with a view to the appointment of a special Sub-Committee. This was done, and as a result this Sub-Committee was established by Section IV. of the Ministry of Reconstruction in November 1918. The terms of reference given to the Sub-Committee were as follows:—

“To consider what economic part women can take in the development of agriculture having particular regard to the Report presented by the Agricultural Policy Sub-Committee and to recommend what steps should be taken to give practical effect to such conclusions as may be drawn.”

The Sub-Committee was constituted as follows:—

Mrs. Roland Wilkins (*Chairman*).  
 The Lady Guendolen Guinness.  
 Miss M. M. Macqueen.  
 The Hon. E. Strutt.  
 Mr. C. S. Orwin.  
 Mr. P. G. Dallinger.  
 Mr. C. Bryner Jones.  
 Mr. W. W. Berry; and  
 Miss Gladys Pott (*Secretary*).

The services of Miss Pott were lent to the Sub-Committee by the Women's Branch of the Board of Agriculture.\*

In March 1919, when most of the Committees of the Ministry of Reconstruction were transferred to other Departments, this Sub-Committee was transferred to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. Miss Gladys Pott resigned the secretaryship in April 1919, and the services of Mr. Arthur Ashby, of the Inquiry Staff of the Agricultural Wages Board, were lent to the Sub-Committee by Sir Henry Rew.

2. *Scope and methods of enquiry.*—The Report of the Agricultural Policy Sub-Committee (over which Lord Selborne presided) expresses the hope of that Committee "that numbers of women who have been working on the land during the war will wish to remain in agricultural occupations and to avail themselves of the openings which will be presented to them in the many branches of farming, such as dairying in its various forms, pig-breeding, and poultry keeping."† The Employment Sub-Committee were of opinion that these brauches of the agricultural industry were not the only ones which might be considered in connection with the employment of women. They have accordingly examined the subject in relation to the position and prospects of arable farming, dairy farming (including cheese-making), market gardening and fruit growing, afforestation, osier growing and basket-making and flax production. They have also considered it in relation to the position and prospects of such industries allied to agriculture as bacon curing, the manufacture of potato flour, of farina, of beetroot sugar, the making of jam, pulping of fruit, and drying of vegetables. Consideration has further been given to the connection of the employment of women in agriculture with some existing rural industries, and the development of others.

In addition, a short study of the history of the employment of women in agriculture has been made.

The Sub-Committee adopted several methods of enquiry. Circulars have been issued; memoranda have been prepared by authorities on various subjects and by the members and secretaries of the Sub-Committee; *viva voce* evidence has been taken; personal enquiries have been made by the Chairman and Miss

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\* During the existence of the Ministry of Reconstruction in the period in which the Sub-Committee was pursuing its inquiries, Miss Pott was in the position of an official of that Ministry.

† Cd. 9079, par. 176.

Gladys Pott; and much information was gathered by correspondence with persons financially interested in, or having knowledge of, particular phases of the industries considered by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee issued a circular of enquiry on the experience of farmers in the employment of women during the period of the war. On general dairy farming Miss Pott interviewed a large number of authorities; Mr. James Mackintosh gave evidence before the Committee; and various published papers were consulted. Attention was given to cheese-making and milk-drying by consultation with educationists, factory owners, visits to factories, and correspondence. Bacon-curing factories were visited and information elicited by means of correspondence. A memorandum on poultry-keeping in relation to women's work on the land was prepared by Mr. P. G. Dallinger; and authorities on this subject consulted by Miss Pott. The subject of market gardening was closely studied by means of circulars and personal enquiries by Miss Pott. Memoranda on the employment of women in market gardening were received from Mr. G. P. Berry (of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries) on the Home Counties, from Mr. R. G. Hatton (East Malling Fruit Experiment Station) on Kent, and from Mr. L. M. Marshall and Mr. R. Aldington on Worcestershire. Mr. G. P. Berry, Mr. L. M. Marshall, and Mr. W. W. Berry gave evidence before the Committee. The evidence of the last named related to conditions in Kent. Information from other districts was obtained by correspondence. Some industries related to market gardening and fruit growing, e.g., jam-making, fruit-drying and bottling, canning and pulping, vegetable drying, (dry) pea-picking and sorting, potato starch and farina manufacture were the subjects of enquiries by interviews, visits to factories, and correspondence. The prospects of beet-growing and the manufacture of beet-sugar also received attention. Miss Pott visited the areas in which flax has been grown, and interviewed growers, workers and some technical and administrative authorities. She also visited areas in which forestry work has been done by women, saw the work, and consulted administrators and workers, and some authorities on forestry work.

The position of women engaged on farms, whose duties are partly domestic and partly agricultural, was brought prominently before the Committee. Written and verbal evidence was received from Mrs. Abel Jones (Technical Inspector for Wales, Women's Branch of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries) on Wales, from Mrs. Stobart on Durham, from Mrs. Marshall (of the Ministry of Labour) on Cornwall, and from Miss Franklin (of the Women's Branch, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries). The Women's Branch of the Board of Agriculture supplied the Committee with reports of conferences on this subject which were held at Newcastle and Aberystwyth in the early part of this year.

The relation of employment provided by some of the rural industries to the employment of women in agriculture was also considered by the Committee, and information was obtained by visits, memoranda, and correspondence. A special memorandum on Rural Industries in the Oxford district was supplied by

Miss Woods, of the Institute for Research in Agricultural Economics, University of Oxford.

The need of provision for training women in various phases of agricultural work (and for domestic work on farms) came before the Committee; and the position of Women's Institutes in relation to provisions for education and social life was considered. Mrs. Harris, of the Federation of Women's Institutes, prepared a memorandum and also gave evidence on this subject.

In connection with each subject of enquiry, care has been taken to consult any existing associations (or the secretaries of such) which are connected with the industry, or branch of the industry, for the purposes of education, propaganda, or protection. Amongst such Societies are the Royal Agricultural Society, the National Farmers' Union, the British Dairy Farmers' Association, the National Utility Poultry Society, the Agricultural Organisation Society and the Rural League.

Representatives of various Government Departments or branches of Departments dealing with subjects under consideration have been consulted; and attention to various printed papers has been given by the Chairman and Secretaries.

The Committee have to record their gratitude to all those persons who have assisted them in their investigations.

The Sub-Committee have met on fifteen occasions for the purpose of taking evidence, or considering the information obtained. They have now to submit the results of their enquiries and deliberations.

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## CHAPTER II.

### EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE.— HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.

(By ARTHUR W. ASHBY.)

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3. *Scarcity of materials.*—There are few subjects in the social history of this country which lie more in obscurity than the everyday life of the agricultural workers. There are histories of agriculture, and histories dealing specifically with agricultural labour, but when they are consulted disappointments are incurred. Ideas of changes in organisation of work and life, and stories of some economic and social movements are easily gathered from these histories; but a record of normal or static life is rarely to be found. The reasons for this are obvious. Historians frequently desire to explain the present conditions of things, and they do this by references to the changes of the past. Indeed one of the most popular historians of English agriculture definitely states this to be his object. For their materials historians depend upon the chroniclers, who are often critics, of the different ages; and in each age the chronicler is inclined to be more concerned with the abnormal or the changing condition than with the normal or common life. Even official recorders

are more concerned with the excrescences of social life than with the smooth surfaces of things which move freely and without friction. This position is very much emphasized in the history of the female workers in agriculture, for in only one period is information on the conditions of their employment and life readily available. Between 1840 and 1870 the conditions of female labour in agriculture were commanding public attention, first through the inquiries of the Poor Law Commissioners, and later through a special Royal Commission. At other times the position of women in agriculture does not appear to have called for public attention directed to remedial ends; consequently information as to this position is scarce. Here and there may be seen glimpses of their ordinary farm life, but nowhere, in any age, is there a clear and complete picture. In social history some of the most important things pass unobserved because they are not causing social trouble. Women in agriculture had few grievances, and they bore their trials patiently, or settled their problems by their own inimitable, individual methods.

4. *Women's labour and economic conditions.*—There can be no doubt that the labour of women has been an important item in rural economy, in several of the past centuries; but it appears that the importance of the field labour of women, both in the economy of the farm and in that of the labourers' households, has been greatest when labour has been plentiful and cheap.\* To the superficial observer this may appear to be paradoxical, but the reason for the fact is simple. Women have undertaken the harder drudgery of the field work of the farm only when wages of men were insufficient to support the household of the labourer. Slight exceptions to this rule may be found when other motives come into play, as in the case of the increase in the employment of women since 1915, and during the period of Napoleonic wars; but even here it is not clear that the stimulus to taking employment does not partly arise from insufficiency of wages at the beginning of a period of rapid rise in prices. The patriotic impulse has been markedly strong during the recent period. Also, allowance must be made for the fact that women like some types of work, e.g., harvesting before the advent of machines, and more recently the summer work in fruit plantations and hop gardens. But the degradation of the agricultural labourer, which occurred in the period immediately following the Napoleonic wars, was the cause of the greatest influx of women into agricultural employment which has ever occurred in this

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\* An exception is to be found in the conditions prevailing in Northumberland and to some extent in Durham, in the 18th and 19th centuries. There are, however, special reasons for this. Farm settlement occurred at a later period in Northumberland than in most other parts of England; and the type of farm settlement in the districts in which women on farms have been most numerous is one not generally found in other parts of England. Feudal conditions remained in Northumberland until more recent times than in other parts of the country, and Scottish influences were powerful in some periods. The "bondage" system, which largely accounts for the number of women employed, is practically peculiar to Northumberland, and appears to have been the result of the late continuance of feudal conditions and of Scottish influences.

country. On the other hand, Thorold Rogers, definitely states that in the period following the Great Plague of the 14th century, when labour was scarce, and unprecedented, perhaps unrepeated, increases in wages were occurring, the labour of women was more scarce than that of men. "The rise in wages after the plague is strikingly illustrated in the price of women's labour. Before the plague, women were employed in field work, as in reaping straw after the corn was cut, in hoeing, in planting beans, in washing sheep, and sometimes in serving the thatcher and tiler. Generally they are paid at the rate of a penny a day, but sometimes less. After the plague, women's labour is rarely recorded, but they are seldom paid less than twopence, sometimes as much as threepence per day. The same facts are observed in boys' labour, which becomes much dearer."\* Thus at a time, between 1815 and 1850, when farm labour was more plentiful than at any other period of English history large numbers of women and children were employed; but in the period of greatest scarcity of labour, the number of women employed was diminishing. Much evidence to this effect could be produced, but the observations of the Hon. Edward Stanhope on the position in the Wolds of Lincolnshire in 1867 are worthy of quotation.† Speaking of the bad distribution of labour in the "close"‡ and "open" parishes, he says of a "close" parish:—"Work is plentiful and certain, the wages high, and the men having this are not inclined to leave the place. Their wives are too well off to work; but in an 'open' parish, with a surplus population, where the men are always in an unsettled state, living from hand to mouth, almost all the women and girls are employed."†

Woman labour on the farm naturally falls into two classes—the semi-domestic servant whose work includes household duties, as well as some in the byres, yards and fields; and the "outworker," "dayworker," or "fieldworker," whose duties are purely agricultural. The system of employing women of the former type, whose duties are semi-domestic and semi-agricultural, has been an institution in certain of the more pastoral districts of England and in nearly the whole of Wales. The employment of labour of this type has been much more permanent and steady than that of the field worker. It is the woman field worker who has arisen on the social horizon and disappeared, who swelled the supply of farm labour at one time and was practically unobtainable at another. It is to this class that public attention has been directed, especially during the nineteenth century, and it is this class which creates the seeming paradox that woman labour is most plentiful when the general supply of labour is both adequate and cheap.

\* Six Centuries of Work and Wages. Ed. 1908, pp. 233-4.

† First Report of the Commissioners on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, 1868, p. 72.

‡ A "close" parish was one in which the real property was wholly or mainly owned by one person, and in which, consequently, it was easy to control the number of population; an "open" parish was one in which the real property was held by several, sometimes by many, persons, and into and out of which population moved freely.

*5. A.D. 1350-1485.*—Women have been employed in agriculture from the earliest days of the development of what has been called the “agricultural proletariat.” The main class of women workers were the farm servants and dairy-women, women as field workers appearing only at certain seasons of the year, and as regular workers in the fields only during periods when peculiar conditions prevailed. Indeed, one historian of English agricultural labour has stated that “previous to the development of the ‘large farm, women had seldom done day labour, except in harvest. There was, in fact, no class of women working by the day. Maids were, of course, employed on both arable and pasture farms, and women did all kinds of agricultural labour ‘on the family holding, as they almost always do where there are small farms or freeholds.’”\* While this is not strictly true, it serves to emphasize conditions which will be treated later; but women appeared as day workers on English estates as early as the 13th century. Accounts may be found showing payments to field workers for such jobs as planting (dibbing) beans, gathering straw or stubble, weeding corn (one account mentions weeding onions) and washing sheep. One account appears to indicate that on occasions they fed, washed and sheared sheep,† but this was exceptional. It is very clear from some of the statutes of the 14th century that women were employed on farms, both in indoor and outdoor work. The Statute of Labourers, 1388, fixed the same maximum yearly wages of 6*s.* for a “swineherd, deyrie woman and woman labourer.” It is nevertheless true that their most important work was done during the harvest time. Until harvesting machinery was invented in the 19th century the corn harvest was the most pressing time in rural work. All the forces were strained to get through the tasks, and in some periods the whole population had to join in the work. Under some manorial regulations housewives and marriageable daughters were exempted from harvest labour. The more general practice, however, appears to have been to impress every person of the classes used to manual labour for the work of the harvest. The women tenants of holdings from which labour-services were due were certainly expected to play their part in the harvest, although not necessarily to undertake the same tasks as when a husband or son was available. The first Statute of Labourers, passed after the Black Death, mentions women with men in the classes providing for compulsion to work. This statute also attaches particular importance to harvest work, for reapers and mowers are specially mentioned in the clauses providing for imprisonment for leaving work without cause or license. A later Statute of Labourers, 1388, again provided that servants, artificers, and apprentices “shall be compelled to serve in harvest, to cut, gather, and bring in the corn.” In spite of the provisions of these statutes, however, woman labour, except during harvest time, appears to have been scarce. Payments to women for farm

\* Hasbach. *History of the English Agricultural Labourer*, p. 69.

† Rogers. *Agriculture and Prices*, II., p. 580.

labour recorded by manorial officers are certainly less frequent at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries than for earlier periods.

Not only was compulsion sometimes applied to field-workers, but also occasionally to servants. A Gloucestershire manorial instruction enjoins the steward to collect on certain days the entire grown up population of the manor and to select the necessary servants for the different callings.\* But there seems no reason to doubt that on the whole a sufficient number of women were to be found for the duties of servant in farmhouse and dairy with some attendant duties in the byres.

6. *A.D. 1485-1600.*—During the 15th and 16th centuries, few, if any, changes occurred in the employment of women, other than those changes in the conditions of employment and life which affected the whole of the social classes to which they belonged. We find them again at work in the harvest, and engaged as servants on farms. Henry Best, describing his farm in Yorkshire, says:—“We kept constantly five plowes going and milked fourteen kine, “wherefore we had always fower men, two boys to go with the oxe-plowe, and two good lusty maid servants.”† On the eve of the dissolution of the monasteries there were residing in 22 houses in Leicester, Warwick and Sussex 255 “hinds,” and 76 “women servants,” presumably employed on the demesne farms, which givesg an average to each farm of about 11 hinds and 3 women servants. On the other hand, the demesne farm of a Kentish nunnery on the Isle of Sheppey does not appear to have employed a woman.‡ The sizes of the farms, and consequently the number of people employed, varied to a considerable extent during the 15th and 16th centuries. In some areas small cultivations prevailed and few labourers, men or women, were employed. In other areas there were large farms. In his *Description of England*, Harrison complains of estates getting into few hands, sometimes under two or three large farmers; but even where there were large farms or estates with records of labour, the number of persons regularly employed were so small that others must have been employed in the busy seasons. Fitzherbert, writing in the 16th century, appears to have been an advocate of the labour of women on the farm. He stated that it was not good economy for a woman to confine her efforts to the distaff only. Some of the women of his day measured the corn for grinding, tended the poultry, swine, and cows, tilled the garden, preserved its potherbs, and replenished the house floor with its strewing herbs, winnowed the corn, made the malt, tossed the hay, filled the muckwain, drove the plough, marketed the poultry and dairy produce, and seem to have left little labour to the theoretical monopoly of the more muscular sex. But how far he was dealing with facts, and how much he was influenced by his own ideas of economy, it is

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\* Gloucester Cartularies (Roll Series), III., pp. 213-4.

† Surtees Society. Vol. XXXIII.

‡ Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, Vol. I., pp. 223-236.

difficult to judge. However, other evidence makes clear the fact that he was dealing with several classes of women engaged on farms. An assessment of wages made by the Rutlandshire Justices in 1563 sets out the classes of women servants with, it appears, some characterisation of the social value in which they were held. "A chief woman servant being a cook, and can bake, "brew, make white bread and malt, and able to oversee other "servants may have for her wages by the year 20*s.*, and for her "livery 6*s.* 8*d.* A second woman servant which cannot dress "meat, bake, brew, nor make malt of the best sort may have for "her wages by the year 18*s.*, and for her livery 5*s.* A mean "or simple woman servant which cannot do but outworks and "drudgery may have for her wages by the year 12*s.*, and for her "livery 4*s.*" Indeed many, if not most, of the assessments of wages mention one or more classes of servants, and sometimes women workers in hay- or harvest-time, but rarely mention women field-workers. At the end of the 16th century it appears that here and there a woman was employed in field work during the whole of the year,\* but for the most part they were employed weeding, haymaking, and harvesting.

Attempts were still made to apply compulsion to work. Under some of the statutes dealing with apprentices, pauper children, both boys and girls, were set as "apprentices to husbandry." Other statutes, dealing with vagrancy, provided much more stringent conditions. In 1563 an Act (5 Eliz. c. 4) was passed to prevent destitution and medicancy. Under its provisions persons not having 40*s.* per annum might be compelled to work. All such persons between 12 and 60 years of age, if not otherwise employed, might be "compelled to serve in husbandry, by the year, with "any person that keepeth husbandry, and will require any such "person to serve within the same shire." Unmarried women between the ages of 12 and 40 years might be "compelled to serve "by the year, week, or day, for such wages and in such reasonable "sort and manner as shall be deemed meet, under penalty of "commitment."

With the exception of apprentices and servants, there is little evidence that compulsory powers given to the justices and other local officials brought many women to agricultural employment, except, perhaps, during the busy summer seasons; but up to the end of the 16th century comparatively few village families, even those whose main income was obtained from employment, were entirely without interest in the land. Work for the wives and daughters of even the cottars and the smallest cultivators would be found with the crops and stock belonging to the family. In fact, a complaint was made even as late as the end of the 18th century that the daughters of squatters in Shropshire were kept at home to milk a half-starved cow instead of going into farm service. It is probable that where small family holdings were numerous, the work on those holdings, the demand for women for

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\* See Rogers. *Agriculture and prices*, Vol. VI., page 615.

the complex duties of farm servants, and the extra work in the busy seasons of the summer provided all the employment required by the poorer women of the village. Moreover, the duties of women in even the poorer home included the practice of some of the domestic crafts now taken over by men and machines.

*7. A.D. 1600–1760.*—The modern period of the history of English agriculture may be considered to begin about 1760. Changes in the economic organisation were occurring during the whole of the 17th and the first-half of the 18th centuries, but these changes were accelerated after 1760. Many of the foundations of the modern economic organisation of agriculture were laid or completed between 1760 and 1840. From the end of the 16th century until the beginning of the modern period there is little information to be obtained on the position of women in the industry. On the whole, the period was one of economic stability in the rural districts. There were years when food was scarce, and there were localities in which there was a surplus of labour at some periods. It was a period in which the administration of the laws relating to the poor affected the labourer in nearly every phase of his life. The Settlement Act of 1662 was, perhaps, the most important of these laws. This Act limited the freedom of movement of labourers and was partly responsible for some variations in local conditions. The system of placing children, both boys and girls, who became chargeable to the parish, as apprentices to husbandry, was also maintained.\*

The farm servant system still continued, and also developed to some extent in the whole of the western and northern counties. On the larger farms which had been created the female servant appears to have approached the purely domestic type, but on the smaller farms some agricultural duties were undertaken by the farm servant. Women field workers were still employed weeding corn, haymaking and harvesting. Women servants were mentioned in all the assessments of wages during the period, and sometimes maximum rates of wages were fixed for dairywomen. The rates for women working by the day were usually confined to the time of haymaking and harvest. An assessment made by the Essex Justices in 1661 mentions only women day workers, viz., women haymakers, weeders of corn and women reapers, while an assessment made by the Bury St. Edmund Justices in 1682, mentions only “dairymaids” or “cooks,” amongst women workers. Several assessments of wages made by the Quarter Sessions for the county of Warwick during this period deal with the wages of women. In 1657 maximum rates were fixed for maid-servants, and for women casual workers. “The best maid-servant not to exceed 1*l.* 10*s.* by the year. Except she make mault, and then not to exceed 2*l.* . . . . “ Maids and women “working in harvest for reaping not to exceed 8*d.* by the day.

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\* See Hasbach. *History of the English Agricultural Labourer*, p. 83; and for definite instances, *Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History*, Vol. III., No. 6, pp. 136–140.

"For haymaking and other work at other times not to exceed 4d. by the day." In 1672 wages were fixed for two categories of workers. Amongst rates fixed "by the year" are "those for a woman servant able to manage a household," a "second woman servant," "a dairymaid or washmaid"; and amongst labourers hired "by the day" are a "woman haymaker," "weeders of corn," "a raker in corn harvest," and a "woman reaper." Exactly the same classes of women appear in an assessment made in 1730, but in 1738 the rate for "dairymaid or washmaid" was omitted.\* It also appears from accounts of a Warwickshire parish that women were sometimes engaged, as in the middle ages, serving the thatcher.† Such information as is available tends to show that the position of the employees on farms were improving in some respects; and it is certain that wages were rising fairly rapidly during some parts of the period. In many, if not most districts, the cottage holdings of the labourers remained, and the women still had their cottage industries. A picture of conditions in the Wye valley of Hereford, which may be somewhat highly coloured, was given by a Herefordshire squire in 1610. He tells us "that stretching for a mile and half on either side of his house are five hundred poor cottagers who are entirely engaged in spinning flax, hemp and hurds"; that when the harvest was over he counted 300 persons gleaning in one field. The female farm servants were recruited amongst the daughters of the cottage holders. The wives and children of the cottagers also worked at times upon the farms, but their employment was slight except in harvest. Their time was generally fully occupied in looking after their own small areas of crops and small numbers of livestock, and in the pursuit of small industries at home.

8. A.D. 1760—1840.—Between 1760 and 1840 there was a definite change in the organisation of English agriculture. The enclosure of common fields, and sometimes of wastes, had been going on spasmodically, and in local areas, for several centuries. Here and there the number of small cultivators had been reduced or they had disappeared altogether. In some places reverse movements had occurred, and the position of the small cultivator had been strengthened at various times; but during the years under consideration the consolidation of estates and farms was more extensively and rapidly pursued than in any previous period. From one cause and another the small cultivator became more and more of a landless labourer, and his womenfolk were bound to seek such employment as was available.

But it is now necessary to distinguish clearly between the pastoral counties of the north, north-west, west and south-west of England, and of Wales, and the more arable counties of the north-east, east, and south-east of England, and the cattle-feeding

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\* See Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, Vol. III., No. 6, pp. 170-175. (Ashby. A Century of Poor Law Administration in a Warwickshire village.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 176.

counties of the Midlands. In the pastoral districts the farms still remained comparatively small in size, and the labour of the family was more nearly sufficient for the cultivation and attendance on livestock. Here the servant system of employment, both for men and women, but more particularly the latter, strengthened its hold. In the counties in which arable cultivation was extending and the size of farms was increasing, the system of day labour was rapidly developed. It was in these counties that the casual employment of women eventually reached its greatest importance; but in the districts near London, in which a comparatively highly developed commercial agriculture was growing, casual labour at other times than harvest first became an important item in economy of the farm.

The Settlement Act was still in force during the whole of this period, and was yet partly responsible for some variations in the supply of labour. In some parishes, particularly after 1790, there was a great surplus of labour, while in others a smaller surplus existed, and in a few the supply was not greater than the demand. Men and women, especially men, were able to travel to work of a casual nature if they held licences granted by local parish officers; but in some parts of the period the liberty of seeking employment was severely restricted. The women may have been chiefly affected as servants, domestic or agricultural. For instance, the overseers of Leamington issued a circular advising householders to keep down the number of servants, and to engage them for 51 weeks only, so that a legal settlement could not be obtained. There was also a tax on domestic servants during some part of the period.

The women of many districts still maintained their bye-industries until at least the end of the 18th century. The records of a Warwickshire parish show clearly that spinning was quite a common occupation of women, and weaving seems also to have been practised.\* It is known that spinning was carried on in homes of farm workers in Gloucestershire, Devonshire, Westmorland, Cumberland and Wales, and also in some of the eastern counties. Indeed, it was stated that the general employment of the female part of a labourer's family in most parts of Cumberland was spinning, when they were not otherwise engaged on female duties.† But the earnings of home spinners were frequently small, e.g., 4d. a day of 10 or 11 hours' work, or 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. a week. Housewives sometimes earned only 1s. per week.‡

The peasant holders were working their holdings with family labour; the farmers of medium sized farms with servants, male or female, and often both, with day labour in the harvest period. The large farmers employed both servants and constant day labourers, with extra casual labour in harvest. On the larger

\* Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, Vol. III., No. 6, pp. 150-151.

† Eden. State of the Poor. II., p. 84.

‡ Eden. State of the Poor. II., pp. 84, 139, 796. Young. Annals XXVI. pp. 7, 17.

farms there was a tendency for the female servants to become purely domestic, and other women were employed both as fairly constant day workers, and in large numbers as casual workers. It appears that the "agricultural ladder" still existed both for men and women. Writing of Yorkshire, Marshall stated that the labouring classes of both sexes generally set out in life as servants in husbandry. In this occupation they were liberally paid, and many were able to save in a few years sufficient to enable them to marry and start as housekeepers.

In the early part of the period the servant system seems to have been common in most counties. In Hertfordshire a great part of the work was performed by annual domestic servants.\* In Cumberland and Westmorland small farms were cultivated by family labour and a few servants; but many of the farmers' families were still working on the farms. In the west of England, Marshall reported, a considerable share of farm labour was done by farmers themselves, their wives, their sons and daughters.† And in the North Riding of Yorkshire farmers' wives did a great deal of farm work. "Their industry is not "exceeded by that of the women of any country, equalled by "few."‡

It is sometimes difficult to discover from the records of the period how women were employed, for in the 18th century the term "servant" included farm servants of both sexes. The women were hired at fairs in the same way as men, and Defoe remarks of some women he saw at a fair at Charlton, Kent, that they were "eminently impudent," an opinion which might be duplicated many times in the remarks of similar observers in the 19th century. With the extension of corn growing at the end of the 18th century a great deal of special harvest labour was employed. Labourers travelled from the pastoral to the corn-growing areas. Gangs of Welsh, Irish and Scottish workers travelled to various districts. Women and children were employed to a greater extent. The employment of casual women workers in the market garden industry was also extending. "The number of women, "mostly from North Wales, who are employed by the farmers "and gardeners round London, in every summer season, in weed- "ing, making hay, gathering green peas and beans, in picking "fruits, and carrying strawberries and other tender fruit to "market is astonishing."§

In Northumberland, the "bondage" system, under which the worker who lived in the farm cottage engaged to supply a female for certain seasons and certain tasks, existed in much the same form as it has existed within recent times.

The depreciation in the position of the cottagers and farm workers, which was characteristic of this period, began to occur

\* Walker. *Hertfordshire*. 1794. p. 13.

† *Rural Economy of West of England*. I., 107.

‡ Tuke. *Agriculture of the North Riding*.

§ Middleton. *Agriculture of Middlesex* (1811), p. 382.

in various localities at different periods. Generally speaking it was never so conspicuous in the counties north of the Humber, as in those to the south. In some parts of Wales, too, little change in the economic position of the workers occurred, but in others wages fell and the poor rates increased.\* In both countries the position of the farm worker was largely dependent upon the proximity of developing industries, and upon the laxity or severity of the administration of the law of parochial settlement; but sooner or later in the period 1790-1830 all the characteristically agricultural areas of England and Wales experienced an increase in pauperism, largely due to unemployment and to the depreciation in the value of wages through high prices, if not to actual reductions in cash wages. Population was growing rapidly in all the agricultural districts; and in many cases the enclosures of the common fields and wastes and the engrossing of farms, eventually led to the economising of labour.

In some parishes there was an attempt to provide employment for women in the occupations regarded as specially suitable for them, as in the textile bye-industries;† but soon some of the women were "on the round," or working in "the parish gang" or receiving unemployment pay with the men.‡ Under these systems, the unemployed worker put him or herself in the entire control of the parish officials, who arranged with the cultivators of land to take such persons for a period of time proportionate to the acreage or the annual value of the land. The roundsman received from the farmer to whom he was sent some proportion of the average wages paid or of the sum considered necessary to maintain the worker and his or her dependants, while the remainder was provided by the poor rates. The women working under this system were bound to undertake any tasks that might be set for them, although it is probable that the local traditions as to tasks undertaken by the women would to some extent determine the work which might be offered to them.§ The later gang system which developed about 1840 and reached its fullest extent in the sixties, partly arose in this system of relieving unemployed labour in the periods of severe economic depression between 1790 and 1830.

The work done by women during this period seems to have been determined by local custom. In the districts in which large farms existed, the servant tended toward the domestic type, and other women were employed in field work of a casual character, but in Cumberland and Westmorland, as also in the south-western counties, women frequently acted as carters. In Wales, milking was regarded as women's work, and men sometimes refused to undertake it. Men who had been taught to milk as boys professed ignorance of the task when they had reached a man's age.

By 1840 the chief bye-industries of women had disappeared

\* Report of Royal Commission on Land in Wales. Cd. 8221, 1896, p. 627.

† Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, Vol. III., No. 6, p. 151.

‡ Some definite instances are known, but the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 always speaks of "Labourers" without distinction of sex.

§ In some cases, however, where no ordinary work was to be found, they were set to jobs which made an extraordinary break with tradition.

from the villages, although a few remained and were of some importance until 1870. The Commissioners on the Employment of Women in Agriculture in 1843 found button-making in Dorset and lace-making in Devon, and knitting jackets, &c., in the Dales of Yorkshire, but in these industries earnings were low.\* Gloving and straw plaiting also were carried on in the several districts, but the Commissioner for Kent, Surrey and Sussex stated that no domestic industries were carried on in those counties.† The process of enclosure was practically, although not quite, complete. The large farm system was thoroughly established, and considerable extensions of the area under the plough had occurred, but up to this time little advance had been made in the application of labour saving machinery to agricultural production. Horse and manual power were almost the only forms of power used on the farms, although steam had been applied to a few operations, such as threshing. Drills had been invented, some cultivating implements had been improved, made more effective and of lighter draught, but the busy seasons called for all the manual labour which could be secured. Indeed, it is practically certain that with the extension of arable cultivation, the relative proportion of casual labour required to that of labour regularly employed was increased.

*9. A.D. 1840–1870.*—The passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, put an end to the abuses of the old poor laws, and immediately stopped all forms of outdoor relief to able-bodied persons, and to systems of supplementing wages of labour by contributions from the poor rates. Yet after the withdrawal of these allowances, wages did not rise to a standard sufficient to maintain a family. There was still a surplus of population in certain districts, but the abuses arising from this were to some extent mitigated by the removal of the worst restrictions of the Law of Settlement. They were further limited by the development of transport facilities, and by the spread of information of employment to be obtained in other rapidly growing industries. It was not until after 1850 that the full effect of the increased transport facilities on rural population was felt, and indeed, some of the local conditions which had arisen from the system of making each parish responsible for the maintenance of the people born within its boundaries were not obliterated until 1870.

Under these conditions the employment of women in agriculture reached an extent, both as to total number and as to proportions of women to men, never previously known. The gang system of employment, which was the subject of much public attention, was the product of the development of large farms in areas in which there were parishes with surplus population and others in which the supply of labour, particularly at certain seasons, was not sufficient to meet the demand. It began in the Eastern Counties in the years between 1835 and 1845, becoming evident at various times in different localities; but there appears to be no doubt that the system arose in the districts in which large arable farms were

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\*. See Report, pp. 16,295.

† See Report, p. 151.

common, and where, consequently, every farm required many different types of workers, but only required some of them at irregular periods; and especially in those parts of the Fen districts which, being newly drained, needed a great expenditure of labour. The employment of women and children, however, became common in districts in which they had been little employed in field work, and where the old parish gangs were previously weak or almost unknown.\*

Between 1835 and 1850 women and children had to seek some means of supplementing the wages of the husband and the father. If it had not been farm work, it might have been some form of home-industry, quite as wearing and badly paid. The farm labourer suffered in the process of sweeping away the abuses in the system of relief after the passing of the Poor Law of 1834. His wages had been low, but in many cases they had been supplemented by allowances in proportion to the number of his children. Wages did not rise when these rate-aided allowances were abolished. The only way out of the difficulty was to secure employment for more members of his family. The development of large arable farming, with its demand for casual labour, gave him his opportunity. The process was a suicidal one, for there is no doubt whatever that women and children were eventually competing with men for various jobs, and the work of the former was almost invariably the cheaper. It did eventually tend to cut down rates of wages and to throw men out of work.

Habit and custom still determined to some extent the work done by women.† In the Western Counties field labour for girls tended to disappear on the abolition of the parish apprenticeship system. About 1840 girls were employed only occasionally. A good deal of girl labour was employed in Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, but there mostly for casual work in the market garden areas. But where the gangs appeared the customs and traditions were broken down, and women undertook all sorts of jobs in the fields. This may have been due to the fact that the districts in which the gangs were most common were those in which the greatest break in the traditional systems of farming had been shown.

The gangs took two forms, "public" and "private." The first were formed by men who contracted with farmers to do jobs by the piece, and then employed numbers of married women, girls, and boys to do the work for time-rates of payment. The gang-master took his gang from one farm to another, often many miles from their homes. The work undertaken included all manual operations on potato and root crops, weeding corn and pastures, haymaking, and harvesting. The same jobs were done by members of the "private gangs," but these were organised by the farmer himself, who provided a foreman or gang-master. The work of these gangs was done for time-rates of wages. The private gangs did not appear until about 1845,

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\* Report on Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, 1843, pp. 56, 132, 139, 219.

† Report on Employment of Women and Children, 1843, pp. 3, 183.

when they arose in Norfolk. It appears that they were organised by the farmers to save the profit made by the gang-master; but opinions as to these profits held by various witnesses examined in the inquiries which were made in 1843 and again in 1867 varied to a great extent. The conditions arising out of the gang systems differed in the case of public and private gangs. The workers in the former might secure fairly constant employment for some months of the year by following the gang-master from one job or one farm to another. The workers in private gangs were subject to frequent dismissal when separate jobs were finished; but much depended upon the size of the farm, and the variety of cultivations carried on. Also, in some cases, moral conditions in private gangs were better than those which arose in the public gang; but much depended upon the character of the employer.\*

In this period a considerable amount of work was also done by women and children on piece-work jobs taken by the husband and father. In some districts this was one of the most popular methods of obtaining harvest labour.

Soon after 1840 farmers were displaying considerable interest in the improvements of implements, and the application of machinery in farm operations. This interest may be dated from the Oxford meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society in 1839. At that show there were 54 exhibits of implements and machinery, while at Cambridge the next year the number had more than doubled and within a few years these exhibits reached much larger numbers, and great interest was displayed in this section of the Royal shows. The effect of machinery of women's work was noted both in 1843† and in 1867.‡ Considerable progress was also being made in the draining of land. The increase and improvement of implements, together with better drainage, considerably lightened the work of the farm. The improvement must, indeed, have been considerable, for during the period of the highest farming and the widest extent of arable cropping, between 1850 and 1870, the agricultural population was decreasing. This decrease was more marked amongst women than with men.

#### FARM EMPLOYEES IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

—	Males.	Females.
1851     ...     ...     ...     ...	1,114,905	143,021
1861     ...     ...     ...     ...	1,106,279	90,249
1871     ...     ...     ...     ...	935,143	57,988

\* With various conditions connected with the employment of women from 1840 to 1870, as morals, housing, education, &c., the Committee have not been concerned. Many of these have been removed by subsequent legislative and administrative action. And such conditions as housing, which may affect the employment of women, now as in previous times, have been the subjects of inquiries by other bodies.

† Report on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, 1843, p. 131.

‡ Second Report on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, 1868, p. 54.

There is, indeed, nothing in English agricultural history which stands out more clearly than the fact that increasing intensity of cultivation under ordinary farming conditions does not necessarily require an increasing intensity of manual labour. When a change from ordinary farming to market gardening under some systems occurs complications arise; but even here it sometimes happens that the amount of manual labour does not increase in the same proportion as the value of the produce.

But not only was the total number of female employees in agriculture decreasing, the greatest decline shown by the statistics is that in female farm servants. The numbers were:—

1851	...	...	...	...	...	99,000
1861	...	...	...	...	...	46,000
1871	...	...	...	...	...	24,000

This decline was due to some extent to the fact that there had been a movement in some districts to dispense with the services of male servants who were lodged in the house, and to employ more day labourers. The demand for women farm servants has always been most insistent where the lodging of men made the work of the farmer's wife and the domestics more onerous; but this was not the only cause. The wives of labourers had for some time preferred that their daughters should become domestic servants, while their most intelligent daughters themselves had a strong preference for the lighter work.\* In the earlier part of the period some of the girls preferred field work to the duties of the farm servant, because of the laboriousness of the latter, and there was "the greatest difficulty in getting dairymaids."†

The general decline in the number of women employed on farms was sometimes attributed to "over-education"; "which makes the girls anxious to become housemaids, nurserymaids, dressmakers, &c."‡

Mr. Rowland Prothero (now Lord Ernle) has summarised the position in the early part of this period in these words:—"The years 1849 to 1853 which immediately preceded the Crimean War, and the era of agricultural prosperity, were a period of severe depression. Economy of production was necessarily the aim of employers. They naturally applied to their own business the Free Trade Maxim—'Buy in the cheapest market; sell in the dearest.' More machinery was introduced on the land. Small farms were thrown together. There was no diminution in the number of women employed; the gang system, both public and private, prevailed extensively in the Eastern Counties; the supply of labour was still slightly in excess of the demand. The competition of female and child labour continued to depress wages."

However, changes which began sometime during the fifties were soon to alter the whole position. In particular, the public conscience was aroused on the matter of the moral conditions of the countryside. The housing of the working classes, the education of children, and the moral conditions arising out of the

\* Report on Employment of Women and Children, 1843, pp. 6, 216.  
† *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 216.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

gangs were commanding attention. The changes which occurred have been summarised by Lord Ernle:—"Control of the gang system was established by the Gangs Act of 1867, and the employment of children regulated by the Education Acts of 1870, 1873, and 1876, and employers were deprived of the cheapest forms of labour. They were therefore driven to employ a larger number\* of adult males; but the population still remained superabundant, in spite of the constant stream of emigration, and wages advanced little and slowly."†

The labourers, however, had learned their economic lesson, and were now inclined to prefer that their wives and children did not seek employment.

Moreover, farmers were beginning to learn that land could be highly cultivated without the assistance of women and children. "In the districts where the land requires much cleaning, and women and children are much sought for by most of the occupiers, some of the largest farmers cultivate the land without employing females at all." . . . "It is also noticeable that where the custom of employing females on the land had declined . . . the employment of men and boys had increased."‡

In Northumberland the bondage system helped to maintain the number of women. In this county the settlement of the land and the development of agriculture occurred at a somewhat later period than in the South of England. Population was sparse, and in some districts villages were uncommon, consequently there was a demand for labour of any type that could be obtained. The Special Commissioner of 1843 said:—"In the absence of villages (which are rare), to supply occasional assistance, each farm must depend upon its own resources; a necessity is thus created for having a disposable force of women and boys always at command, which is effected in the following manner:—Each farm is provided with an adequate number of cottages having gardens, and every man who is engaged by the year has one of these cottages; his family commonly find employment, more or less; but one female labourer he is bound to have always in readiness, to answer the masters' call, and to work at stipulated wages; to this engagement the name of bondage is given, and such female labourers are called bondagers, or women who work the bondage. Of course, where the hind has no daughter or sister competent to fulfil for him this part of the engagement, he has to hire a woman servant."§ The Commissioner might also have added that one of the distinguishing features of the bondager system was that the hind received from the farmer (and where he had to hire a bondager, paid to her) a fixed sum of money or goods, irrespective of the amount of time worked. The system was one designed to maintain a supply of labour for the busiest seasons, in a district in which no extraneous source of supply existed.

\* Proportion would be a more correct term, in view of the statistics.

† English Farming, p. 409.      ‡ First Report, 1868, p. x.

§ Report, 1843, p. 297.

In parts of Wales, particularly Pembroke and Carmarthen, a similar system had been established. In these counties, as in Northumberland, the decline in the number of women was less marked than in other parts of Wales; but the total decline in the number of female farm workers in Wales was much more marked than in England. "In 1851 there were over 26,000 females returned as indoor farm servants, and 1,268 described as out-door labourers in Wales and Monmouthshire. By 1871 these numbers had fallen to a little over 6,000 and 1,000 respectively."<sup>\*</sup>

10. A.D. 1870-1910.—In the early part of the decade 1870-1880 considerable changes in the attendant conditions of the employment of women in agriculture began to appear. The Gangs Act of 1867 had made it necessary for the gang master or mistress to obtain a licence; no child under eight years of age might be employed in a gang. The provisions for compulsory education made the work of married women more difficult in some cases, for the older children were no longer available for minding the home and the younger children. Wages of male workers were rising slowly, and the organised movement of agricultural labourers was to some extent in opposition to the employment of women.

There was by this time a considerable improvement in the implements and machinery for the work of the farm, and a very extensive movement to use the available machinery. In particular, the use of harvesting machinery for hay and corn was soon to deprive women of some of the more pleasant tasks (partly because of their associations) they had hitherto undertaken. "The displacement of manual labour arising from the greatly extended use of drills, horse-hoes, mowers, binders, manure distributors and the like, must have been in the aggregate very great, and probably to this more than to any other single cause the reduced demand for farm labourers may be attributed."<sup>†</sup> The decline in the area of arable land with the consequent decline in the acreage of cereals, and in some counties, a marked decline in the acreage under roots, reduced the demand for women's labour.

Every part of the country was provided with transport facilities, and the villagers were now in fairly close touch with the demand for labour in other industries. In the later seventies and onwards a large amount of women's labour was diverted from the land into domestic service. For this there were several causes. Public opinion was hardening against the employment of women in the more drudging tasks of the farm, and the clergy and some of the squires were particularly antagonistic. Fathers and husbands objected to it, partly because they realised that it spoilt the market for their own labour, and partly because they liked their daughters and wives to look after their homes. These opinions hardened at a time when the urban standard of comfort was rising, the suburban middle class was extending, and the

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\* Report of Royal Commission on Land in Wales. Cd. 8221. 1896, p. 600.  
† Decline in Rural Population, 1880-1906. Cd. 3273. 1906, p. 14.

demand for domestic servants increasing. It is probable, also, that former sources of domestic help were contracting. The daughters of small tradesmen, farmers, and artizans, found opportunities of becoming shop-assistants, teachers, and clerks, or for similar work which was considered to give a higher social status than that of the domestic servant. They were enabled to take these positions by the improved system of public education, while the improved education also gave the daughters of labourers the opportunity to enter private houses. This was clearly recognised in Wales. "The spread of elementary education may be said to have revolutionised the position in Wales. . . . Prior to the passing of the Education Act in 1870, it was regarded in many rural districts as an act of folly to give a labourer's daughter the same advantages as to elementary education as her brother received. Since 1870, however, the girls have had their revenge; their advantages in the elementary schools are now probably greater than those of boys, and they are at least on an equal footing as to secondary education. The result has been that Welsh girls have been attracted to towns, or drawn away from agricultural pursuits to a much larger extent than the young men have. They are in great demand not only in Wales, but also in many parts of England, for domestic service, and their reputation in this respect is high. Dressmaking and millinery, and service in business establishments, have, however, proved more powerful allurements than perhaps any other occupation. . . . Other occupations, scholastic and clerical, also attract the better educated of the girls, so that when the more intelligent and ambitious, as well as the vain and indolent, are thus drained off, there is but a small residue for the farmer to select from."\*

There was a decline in the number of women employed on farms in Wales between 1871 and 1891; and some decline in the proportion of women employed compared to that of men. In 1871 the total number was over 7,000, but in 1891 it barely reached 3,000. In 1871 the proportion of women to the total number of agricultural wage-earners was 11·6, and in 1891 it was 6 per cent. The numbers and the proportion were much better maintained in Cardigan, Pembroke, and Carmarthen, where the system of demanding a woman's labour, when a man was hired, was in vogue.

The decline in the number of female farm employees in England and Wales from 1871 to 1911 is shown by the number at each census period:—

1871	...	...	...	...	57,988†
1881	...	...	...	...	40,346
1891	...	...	...	...	24,150
1901	...	...	...	...	12,002
1911	...	...	...	...	13,245

\* Cd. 8821. 1896, p. 605.

† There are a number of discrepancies in all the statistics, and the figures given must not be taken as more than indicative. The subject will be dealt with later; but the figures do illustrate the fact which is common knowledge.

In the northern counties the decline was much less marked. Indeed, in Northumberland the proportion of women to men was well maintained from 1871 to 1891.

Although the wages of men rose but little and slowly from 1870 to 1890, there was a fall in prices which raised the value of money wages. In some districts reduction in hours were made, and there was an increase in the supply of allotments, with greater opportunities for cultivating them. And from 1890 onwards the regularity of employment for men was increasing. Consequently little was heard of the conditions of woman labour.

The social stress which had arisen, particularly in connection with the gang system, had passed away. With the exception of the counties of Lincoln, Cambridge, and Norfolk the gangs were almost unknown by the early nineties, and here they were employed only for short special periods. In the counties in which gangs existed they were much less common than formerly.

In some districts, particularly in the Eastern Counties, women were employed in pulling and cleaning roots, stone picking, weeding corn, singling turnips, and to some extent in hay and corn harvesting. Sometimes they worked with their husbands on jobs taken by the piece. There was a strong disinclination in certain districts to undertake any form of farm work, even haymaking and harvesting. This was held to be "evidence of "improvement in the labourer's conditions."\*

In Northumberland the bondage system was said to be extinct, but the finding of a woman worker by the hind was still one of the conditions of engagement. The Northumberland farmers sometimes hired "cottars" (single women or widows living in cottages on the farms) or byre-women.†

The comparative importance of the employment of women in the potato growing, market gardening, and fruit and hop growing areas was increasing, partly because of the diminishing numbers employed on ordinary farms and partly because of the development of these industries, with increasing demand for the casual labour of women.

Similar conditions prevailed until the opening of the present century. Extension of the market garden industry continued, increasing use of machinery for harvesting purposes was made; and from 1908 onwards the wages of male farm workers were slowly rising. The employment of women tended to be localised, first in the districts in which day workers were employed on highly cultivated arable farms where potatoes and other vegetable crops were grown, in the market garden and fruit-growing districts; and secondly in the pastoral districts of the west and north-west of England, and in Wales, where the farm servants were employed on comparatively small farms; with, of course, the special conditions prevailing in Northumberland.

\* Report of Royal Commission on Labour. Cd. 6894, 1894, p. 54.

† *Ibid.*, p. 55.

## CHAPTER III.

## EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN, 1910-1918.

## (1) Normal Conditions.

11. *Number of women engaged.* (a) *Census of 1911.*—It has been stated that the number of women employed in agriculture as ascertained by the census at different dates is very unreliable; and this fact is clearly demonstrated by a comparison of recent records and estimates. The census of 1911 gives the following figures for the number of females engaged in agriculture in England and Wales at that date:—

FEMALES ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE, 1911.

Occupations of Females aged 10 years and upwards.	Total.	Em-ployers.	Working for Em-ployers.	Working on own Account.	Others, or no State-ment.
Order VII.—Agriculture ...	94,722	—	—	—	—
1. On Farms, Woods, and Gardens—Farmers, Graziers	20,027	12,252	204	4,725	2,846
2. Farmers, Graziers, Sons, Daughters, or other relatives assisting in the work of the Farm ... ...	56,856	—	—	—	—
3. Farm-Bailiffs, Foremen ...	25	—	—	—	—
4. Shepherds ... ... ...	6	—	—	—	—
5. Agricultural Labourers, Farm Servants — distinguished as in charge of cattle ... ... ...	4,934	—	—	—	—
6. Agricultural Labourers, Farm Servants — distinguished as in charge of horses ... ... ...	—	—	—	—	—
7. Agricultural Labourers, Farm Servants—not otherwise distinguished ...	8,280	—	—	—	—
8. Woodmen ... ... ...	2	—	2	—	—
9. Nurserymen, Seedsmen, Florists ... ... ...	1,170	89	813	55	213
10. Market Gardeners (including Labourers) ...	2,449	375	1,439	270	365
11. Other Gardeners (not Domestic) ... ... ...	583	17	416	51	99
12. Agricultural Machine—Proprietors, Attendants ...	60	53	2	3	2
13. Others engaged in or connected with Agriculture ...	330	11	220	40	59

Thus, excluding 20,000 farmers and graziers, there are 74,000 females, of whom nearly 57,000 are farmers' and graziers' relatives, and some 1,200 in the classes of market gardeners, &c., are either employers or working on their own account. In round figures, 16,000 women, in addition to relatives, were employed.

The total is made up as follows:—

Agricultural labourers (not otherwise distinguished)	8,200
Agricultural labourers in charge of cattle, &c. ...	5,000
Nurserymen, &c. (employees) ... ... ...	800
Market gardeners ,,, ... ... ...	1,400
Other gardeners ,,, ... ... ...	400
Others ... ... ... ...	200

The census was taken in April, 1911, and to anyone who is conversant with agricultural conditions it is obvious that many women who are more or less regularly engaged in agriculture have not been enumerated as following that occupation; while the very large number of women who are casually employed in agriculture is not indicated. Although many of the semi-regular and casual women workers in agriculture are working in April, it is not one of the months when large numbers are employed, except in some districts. The months during which women are employed in the greatest numbers are June, July, August, and September.

12. (b) *Census of Production, 1908.*—Three years before the census was taken, in 1908, each occupier of land was asked to state on the schedule of the Annual Return of Crops and Livestock the number of persons regularly and temporarily employed on the holding. Many of these returns were unreliable, but, estimating the total numbers of all holdings from the returns from about 60 per cent. of the total holdings, the following figures for the number of females were obtained:—

FEMALES OCCUPIED IN AGRICULTURE IN ENGLAND AND WALES,  
1908.

Members of occupiers' families ... ...	144,000
Others, regularly employed ... ...	68,000
Others, temporarily employed ... ...	32,000

The number of "temporarily employed" is that of the persons in temporary employment in the early part of June. Of the total number permanently engaged, 35,000 members of occupiers' families and 19,000 others were under 18 years of age. Of those temporarily employed, 4,000 were under this age.

Dealing with the discrepancy between these figures and those found in the census of 1901, the Report\* states:—

"Farmers' wives are not included (in the census) as assisting the farmer, but there is no doubt that in the returns made to the Board they are, in many cases, counted among the members of the family employed. It may be assumed also that many females who work more or less in the fields would hesitate to return themselves as employed in farm work. The farmer, however, had no motive for hesitation in stating his returns to the Board the total number of women he employs, and there may perhaps be a tendency on his part to include, as employed on the farm, servants whose duties are partially or even mainly of a domestic nature."

13. (c) *Board of Trade Estimates, 1919.*—Estimates prepared by the Board of Trade from a number of statistical enquiries give

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\* Report on Agricultural output of Great Britain, Cd. 6277, 1912.

the following numbers of women employed as "permanent workpeople" in agriculture for July of each year since 1914:—

FEMALES EMPLOYED AS PERMANENT WORKPEOPLE IN  
AGRICULTURE.\*

July.	1914	...	...	...	...	57,000
	1915	...	...	...	...	41,000
	1916	...	...	...	...	79,400
	1917	...	...	...	...	87,100
	1918	...	...	...	...	90,900

It is clear, however, that the figures are not entirely reliable, for even the numbers of "permanent workpeople" vary with the seasons. Another Report gives the numbers for January of each year as follows:—

PERMANENT CIVILIAN WORKPEOPLE IN AGRICULTURE (FEMALES).

January.

1914	...	...	...	...	36,000
1915	...	...	...	...	36,000
1916	...	...	...	...	39,000
1917	...	...	...	...	47,000
1918	...	...	...	...	56,000
1919	...	...	...	...	60,000

14. *Increase in numbers, 1914–1918.*—There is not one set of these figures which can be reconciled with another, and the only point which emerges with comparative certainty is that the numbers of women in fairly regular employment in agriculture have increased since 1914. With regard to this increase, the first-mentioned Report of the Board of Trade states:—

"In the first twelve months after the outbreak of war there was a serious fall in the number of female workers regularly employed in agriculture, owing to the demand for female labour in more highly paid or more attractive spheres of employment. At the same time, large numbers of the most capable young men were drawn from agriculture into the services or into pressing industrial work, and the need for regular female workers on the land became urgent. As the figures (July of each year) show, a net inflow of women in response to this need began (comparatively early) in England and Wales, and has been continuous since 1915."†

As the available statistics do not provide any satisfactory information on the number of women occupied in agriculture, whether as ordinary employees, regular and casual, or as servants whose duties are partly domestic and partly agricultural, and the reliability of statistics of relatives employed may be doubted,‡ the Sub-Committee have to indicate broadly the nature

\* Cd. 9164, 1919, pp. 13–14.

† Report on Increased Employment of Women during the War, Cd. 9164, 1919, p. 13.

‡ There is some ground for the opinion that the census statistics of relatives employed are more reliable than those of other female workers, if only that the "examples of mode of filling up" printed on the schedule give an example where a daughter is entered as a dairyworker. As regards servants, however, the example enters the servant included as "General Servant (Domestic)" which might be true in some counties, but which is misleading in the case of others.

and importance of women's work in the industry, both before and during the period of the war.

15. *General position, 1900–1910.*—The conditions indicated as existing at the beginning of the twentieth century in the previous section had not altered in essentials in 1910. In a few districts there had been a further decline in the number of women willing to take field-work, partly because of the natural disappearance of the older field-workers, partly because of unwillingness of younger women to take up the work, but also partly to lack of demand as farmers adopted machinery, and organised or standardised the work of the farms. In other districts there was a slight movement in the opposite direction, particularly where specialised market gardening, in the form of flower culture and general glasshouse work, was developing. Some stimulus was given to the employment of women of a more skilled type on farms, such as the dairyworkers and poultrywomen trained in institutions, who were employed on the "home farms" of fairly large estates. A movement for similar workers towards the establishment of independent businesses as gardeners and market gardeners, or poultry farmers, may also be noted.

16. *Types of women workers.*—For the purpose of indicating the nature and importance of female labour in agriculture two distinctions must be made: (1) between the wife and the daughter, or other relative of the cultivator, and the ordinary employee who has definite conditions of employment; (2) between the ordinary employees who are engaged partly in domestic duties and partly on the farm and those who are engaged solely on field-work. As regards the nature of duties, these distinctions are to some extent complicated. The work of the cultivator's relative and that of the female servant may not differ in essentials, although where one person in each class is working on the same farm there may be a division of the various jobs to be undertaken which is clearly recognised. This is most marked in the case of the wife of the cultivator, whose position of authority and whose many direct responsibilities lead to a clear division of work. This is illustrated in some cases in which both mistress and servant share the duties of milking and house-cleaning, while the mistress alone undertakes the indoor dairy work; but when mistress and maid both undertake the work of the house and the farmyard there is little essential difference in the duties of either. Where the daughter of the farmer and the servant undertake the dual duties the difference is often even less marked. There is, however, a clear distinction between the relative or servant who undertakes domestic and agricultural duties and the woman who is engaged for field-work. The relative or servant may take part in field-work on occasions, especially during the busy seasons, but as a rule only for a portion of the day—that portion which is at other times devoted to domestic duties. The field-worker, except in Northumberland, is a field-worker only. The servant is engaged for a month or some longer period, often six months, whereas the

field-worker is engaged by the hour or the day, rarely, if ever, longer than by the week, or by the job if on piecework.

17. *Importance of part-time workers.*—The relative importance of the classes of regular and part-time women field workers may be illustrated by some records and estimates from Lincolnshire and Surrey, other estimates being also available. In the Kesteven Division of Lincoln the total number of women employed full-time in 1918 was 786, and that of part-time workers 1,698, the number of fully employed being greater than in normal times.\* In Surrey, whole-time workers numbered 639, and part-time workers 1,553; but in the Kingston district there were only 60 employed full-time, while 750 were in part-time employment.

18. *Distribution of types of women workers.*—Some geographical distinctions also can be made. The importance of the work of the servant type is greatest in the northern, north-western, western and south-western counties of England, and in Wales. Wherever the industry is predominantly pastoral and small farms prevail, the female farm servant is in demand and numbers are employed. In the census the occupation of these women is usually given as "domestic indoor service," so that it is difficult to obtain figures, but there is no doubt as to the facts. The relation of the employment of farmers' female relatives to the size of farms, and the type of farming, can, however, be demonstrated, as in the following table:—

**RELATION OF SIZE OF HOLDINGS AND PROPORTION OF PASTURE LAND TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF FARMERS' FEMALE RELATIVES.**

Division, with Indication of Type of Farming.	Average size of all holdings.	Proportion of Pasture.	Ratio of Farmers' Female Relatives to 1,000 Farmers.
<i>Div. I.A. Eastern Counties :</i> Predominantly arable ... ... ...	76	33	107†
<i>Div. I.B. North-Eastern Counties :</i> Arable, with sheep nearly equal to the whole of England ... ... ...	75	31	183
<i>Div. II.A. South-Eastern Counties :</i> Arable, market gardening, fruit growing, etc. ... ... ... ...	69	55	123
<i>Div. II.B. East Midland Counties :</i> Cattle rearing and feeding, especially feeding ... ... ... ...	75	65	138
<i>Div. III.A. West Midland Counties :</i> Cattle and sheep rearing, and milking ...	66	69	195
<i>Div. III.B. South-Western Counties :</i> Cattle and sheep rearing, and milking ...	62	63	284
<i>Div. IV.A. Northern Counties :</i> Sheep rearing and feeding, and cattle feeding ... ... ... ...	61	69	298
<i>Div. IV.B. North-Western Counties :</i> Milking and cattle rearing ... ...	48	71	346
<b>ENGLAND</b> ... ... ...	65	57	199

\* Cd. 25, No. 22, p. 17.

† These figures show the mean for each division as given in the complete table, Appendix I.

19. *Small farms and family labour.*—Thus the ratio of farmers' female relatives to 1,000 farmers is highest where farms are smallest and pasture farming predominates. The opposite case is demonstrated in the Eastern Counties (Division I.A.) but in the North-Eastern Counties (Div. I.B.) the position is complicated by the influence of northern customs in the East Riding of Yorkshire and parts of Lincolnshire. It rarely happens that economic and social conditions are determined by one set of influences. Here, for instance, although there is a strong general tendency (to say the least) for the ratio of farmers' female relatives to the number of farmers to rise as the size of farms falls, the East Riding of Yorkshire (with comparatively large farms) has a high ratio, and the West Riding (with small farms) has a much lower ratio of relatives to farmers. Part of the reason for this is to be found in the greater opportunities for other employment provided by the industries and commerce of the West Riding; but the influence of opportunities of obtaining other employment is most marked in Middlesex, where, with small pasture farming prevailing, the ratio of female relatives to the number of farmers is comparatively low.

20. *Dairying and family labour.*—The prevalence of dairying on small pasture farms is, however, one of the influences which affect the ratio of female relatives to farmers. Taking the counties in which the number of cows per 1,000 acres is highest it will be seen that the ratio of female relatives to farmers is also high, although the ratio rises higher in some counties in which dairying is not so important.

	<i>Cows per 1,000 acres.</i>	<i>Ratio of Farmers' Female Relatives employed to 1,000 Farmers.</i>
Chester	...     ...     207	373
Lancaster	...     ...     170	350
Derby	...     ...     144	248
Stafford	...     ...     142	246
Somerset	...     ...     137	261
Monmouth	...     ...     134	247

The counties in which the ratio rises higher than in the dairy-ing counties are Westmorland, Cumberland, Northumberland, Devon and Cornwall. Here, with the exception of Northumber-land, milking, cattle rearing, and feeding are closely combined in the pastoral industry.

21. *Male servants make demand for female workers.*—The prevalence of the employment of female servants and relatives is affected to some extent by the conditions of service of male labour. Wherever the system of boarding and lodging male farm servants exists, there is a demand for the work of women. The extra work in the farmhouse entailed by this system makes the domestic duties too arduous for the farmer's wife, and on the smaller farms where the family cannot afford to maintain a servant for purely domestic duties, the duties of the house and farm-yard have been combined; but the connection between the employment of relatives and the provision of board and lodging

of male farm workers is clearly seen in the counties in which this system is most common, viz., in the north-eastern and north-western, and some of the north-midland counties, and in the western counties of Wales.

22. *Family labour in Wales*.—In Wales, where small pasture farms are most prevalent the ratio of female relatives employed to farmers does not fall below 215 to 1,000 in any county, and in three counties it reaches over 400 to 1,000.

Thus there is a close connection between livestock production on comparatively small farms and the employment of female relatives, as also the employment of female servants.

23. *Fieldworkers and arable farming*.—The field work of women, on the other hand, has reached its highest importance during recent years in the arable areas of the east and south-east of England, especially in those areas where market gardening is carried on, or where the system of arable farming includes the production of potatoes and some other vegetable crops. The tradition of women's labour, however, still remained in most counties at the beginning of the period, and there were few, if any, in which women did not work in the fields in some district if not over the whole county. There are instances of counties in which women's labour was almost unknown in some districts during the early part of this period, while it was common in others. This was the case in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

As regards conditions in the Eastern Counties, an interesting account of women's work in Lincolnshire has been given by Mr. R. G. Hatton in his recent Reports:—\*

"One of the characteristics of the county is the number of women employed in agriculture during a considerable portion of the year, even in normal times.

"Women and children are largely employed from March to May in the setting of potatoes. A number of farmers testified to their expertness at the work, and declared that many of the women could set up to an acre a day. From April onwards, the women are frequently employed in hoeing and weeding in the potato and corn crops, whilst in the fruit and market garden areas the picking of soft fruits and the cutting of cabbage begin in May, and carry them through to the potato harvest. Normally the women would not participate much in the corn harvest, unless to work with their husbands in tying and stooking, but at the present time they are more commonly at work even at this season. When potato picking begins the women can find work on this occupation nearly up to Christmas. There is also the autumn plant setting. In normal times, from Christmas round to potato setting would be the slackest time for women; indeed 'they did not care to come out' during the wettest months; now, however, women are employed in potato riddling and the dressing of roots, so that, though this work is not regular it is often very nearly so, as far as the weather and household duties will allow. The census figures, therefore, which give the total number of females regularly employed as 674, in no way represents the amount of female labour employed on the farms and market gardens of Holland. At the same time, it is interesting to note that 340 females, other than the relatives of farmers, are stated to be regularly employed, as against 81 in the Kesteven division. Slightly over 5 per cent. of the regular employees are women, whilst the average for England and

\* Cd. 25, 1919. Nos. 21, 22, 23.

Wales is 6 per cent., according to the Census Returns. Though women have been regularly employed for some years past in Holland, they are now working far more regularly. Potato setting and picking, fruit and flower picking would have been the principal pre-war jobs.

"A large amount of the special bulb work is done by women, who are regularly employed from the beginning of the forcing season to the middle of October. They do the picking, tying, weeding and help with the lifting, grading and planting.\*

"As far back as 1893, in his report on the Holbeach Union, Mr. Edward Wilkinson referred to the gangs of women doing 'twitching, dock pulling and thistle spudding,' while 'corn was also let to gangs.' Again he noted that 'potato setting and picking are both done usually by women and children . . . one farmer had over 50 employed.†

"To-day many farmers would be employing this number, some over 100. Many more women, too, are being brought out on to the land from Boston and Spalding."

These remarks apply to the Holland Division, but somewhat similar conditions are found in Kesteven.‡ In Lindsey, the prevalence of women's work in the fields varies with farming conditions in various districts.

"In pre-war times large areas of the division would employ little female labour. On the Wolds, the cliff and the stronger land there was little work considered suitable for women, nor did they seem anxious like those on the Fen to go out.

"Many of them, with several horsemen to lodge and families of their own, were fully occupied on household duties.

"The carrot and potato lands of the plain and on the limestone always employed women in considerable numbers at certain seasons, and these particular areas are often far shorter of women's labour to-day than before the war. The Moortown carrot area, for instance, drew women from a wide district, and they come to-day from as far away as Market Rasen. At the present time local farmers are employing the women for corn weeding, turnip chopping, and even at harvest-time in areas where their labour was previously rare."§

In Cambridgeshire, where systems of farming somewhat similar to those in the Holland Division of Lincolnshire exist, the labour of women has also been largely utilised.|| The same is true of districts of Bedfordshire, and of the Marshland district of Norfolk where market gardening and fruit growing is carried on. Women are largely employed in the whole of what may be called the market-gardening zone of London, including parts of Middlesex, Essex and Surrey, and in the glasshouse district of Hertfordshire.

In Kent, again, the prevalence of the employment of women varies with the system of farming. Wherever fruit, hops, or market-garden crops are grown, large numbers of women have been employed; but in the Ashford district, where mixed farming is carried on, and on the heaviest Weald soils where there is little fruit or hops, women have been employed only spasmodically.

Similarly in Worcestershire, large numbers of women have been employed, and this is generally true of districts in which market gardening is carried on.

\* See Bulb Growing in S. Lincs. Journal R.A.S.E. ibid.

† (C—6894, VI.) ‡ Cd. 25, No. 22, par. 14.

§ Cd. 25, No. 23, par. 21. || Cd. 25, No. 4, par. 15.

**24. Family labour on vegetable crops.**—In some of the districts where vegetable and fruit crops are grown on a small scale, as on smallholdings and the smaller farms, the labour of relatives of the occupiers has been largely utilised. This is most marked in parts of Lincoln, Cambridge, Worcester, Lancaster and Cornwall.

Indeed, outside the small pasture-farming districts the labour of cultivators' relatives has reached its greatest importance in the districts where smallholdings tend to the market-garden type.

**25. Women's work in the Southern Counties.**—Other conditions exist in the ordinary farming areas, especially where there is rather "thin" farming on light land. Of Berkshire it is reported that:—

"For some years it has been impossible to get women to undertake regular farm work. The older women, who had been accustomed to perform a great deal of field work, such as dung-spreading, hoeing, hedge-cleaning, &c., will no longer undertake work of this nature. During haymaking and harvest, and to a lesser degree for light hoeing through the growing corn in spring, women from the villages will assist; also occasionally for threshing; but otherwise, and for field work generally, the number employed is negligible.\*

"In Wiltshire women for regular work are no longer to be counted upon, and are only to be found regularly employed in quite exceptional cases. The low wages which prevailed for their work in former times, and, possibly, the somewhat higher wages obtained by the men in recent years, have influenced women against engaging in the field work on farms, and it is only for the work at hay and harvest in the pleasanter months of the year, and for the higher wages then offered, that women can be induced to give some assistance."†

**26. Women's work in the Midland Counties.**—In the cattle-feeding districts of Northamptonshire, Rutland, Leicestershire and Buckinghamshire, very few, if any, women were employed; but even in these counties women worked on the arable farms.

In Derbyshire women did little field work, often because there was no supply of woman labour, unless the workers were boarded in the farmhouse, which the farmer (and his wife) considered to be undesirable; and woman's labour was regarded as of little use outside the house or yard.‡ But in the Uttoxeter district of Staffordshire "there are a large number of labourers with small-holdings which are managed by the wives and daughters while the men are at work"; and in the Leek and Cheadle districts, "which consist of small grass farms, the wives and daughters of farmers, and domestic servants, are regularly employed helping with a large part of the work."§

In Lancashire women workers of both types have been employed. In the market-gardening district of the south-west of the county both the relatives of small farmers and ordinary female employees worked in the fields and in the preparation of products

\* Cd. 25, No. 2, par. 12.

† Cd. 25, No. 39, par. 8.

‡ Cd. 25, No. 7, par. 10.

§ Cd. 25, No. 33, par. 10.

for market; while in the pastoral parts of the county most female employees were of the servant type. Again, in Cheshire, women were employed in operations on potatoes and similar crops, but where these crops were not grown they were employed mainly as servants on dairy farms.

27. *Women's work in the Northern Counties.*—In the Dales of Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmorland, as in the south-western counties, the work of the servants in the byres and yards was important; but the field work of these servants was irregular and mostly confined to the busy seasons. In Northumberland and Durham both field workers and servants were employed. The field workers were of two classes; some were more or less casual workers, drawn from the towns and the colliery villages, while others were permanently engaged in agriculture. The former were sometimes real agricultural workers, but more often were seeking extra financial resources, and fresh air, in the summer time. They were, however, sometimes employed on the same farm year after year, and thus became fairly skilled workers. In Northumberland, there were a large number of skilled women labourers who worked all the year round. The work of the field women, whether casual or regular, consisted of such jobs as picking stones, sorting potatoes, manuring potato rows, picking wickens, hoeing turnips, weeding, haymaking, snagging turnips, stooking, feeding the sheaves to the thresher, &c. Some of the regular women workers also led horses and did carting, but these were rare until the shortage of labour was felt during the period of the war. The work of the servant type consisted of domestic work—washing, cleaning, cooking, baking, work in the yards, as feeding calves and milking, and some seasonal field work.

28. *The skilled woman worker.*—A large amount of work on farms, especially on “home” farms, was done by another type of women. On the home farms of estates, the wife of the bailiff or foreman is frequently expected to look after poultry and the work of the dairy. The contract of service of these managers of home farms, particularly on the smaller estates, frequently includes the services of the wife in the dairy and poultry yard; and some of the best practical poultry and dairy work is done by these women. On the larger estates with more ambitious home farms, a dairymaid, trained in one of the recognised institutions, is sometimes employed. The respective numbers of women in these classes are unknown, but there can be little doubt that at present the wives of bailiffs, foremen, or managers form the larger class.

Such is a general sketch of the position of women on the farms of England before 1914 and during the first years of the period of the war. Recent developments will be dealt with later.

29. *Women's work in Wales.*—In Wales and Monmouth, also, conditions vary to some extent. The Monmouthshire conditions are similar to those in the western counties of England, rather than those of the typical Welsh counties. The number of women employed is not very large, and these are mostly relatives of farmers, with some servants. Changes have taken place in those

counties where women's labour was pre-eminent at the end of the nineteenth century.\*

"In Pembrokeshire 'women assist to a considerable extent in farm work. Years ago it was customary for married women—the wives of agricultural labourers—to do much work in the fields; latterly, however, this practice has declined, and it is comparatively rare now for married women to work in the fields, except at harvest periods. Farmers' wives and daughters and domestic servants, however, especially in the Welsh-speaking districts, are of considerable assistance to the farmer. Milking throughout the county is done by the domestic servants, and these also have charge of the calves, pigs and poultry. In some cases women look after the cows, but this duty is more usually entrusted to boys. A great scarcity of domestic servants is reported everywhere, and farmers' wives obtain very considerable difficulty in obtaining adequate assistance.' "†

It is also stated that "of the 3,271 females returned as domestic servants in private houses in the county (1911), 2,310 are in rural districts and the majority of these would be engaged on farms."‡

Of Cardiganshire it is reported :—

"In no county in England and Wales is female labour used to so great an extent in farming operations as in Cardiganshire . . . Girls in this county are trained to do farm work from early childhood . . . and by the time they have attained the age of fifteen many of them are competent to perform all the lighter tasks that generally fall to the lot of women on farms. Amongst the classes of work invariably undertaken by women are milking, butter- and cheese-making, feeding of calves, pigs, poultry and cleaning of pens. On many farms also the women have entire charge of the cattle, including the cleaning of the cow-houses. They also help in the field when required, and always assist in haymaking and corn harvesting."§

The conditions in Carmarthenshire are best described in Mr. Edgar Chappell's report on that county :—

"Farmers' wives do a considerable amount of work, such as dairy-ing, feeding of stock, &c., which, in the English counties, is done by men.

"The growing repugnance of women to service on farms has led to practical discontinuance of female field work, although even to-day one occasionally finds women engaged in such tasks as setting potatoes, stone-picking, &c. The only kind of field work which is still fairly general is that of haymaking and corn harvesting, although even here, owing to the more extensive use of machinery, their services are not in such great demand as formerly.

"Milking, on the other hand, is almost invariably undertaken by the farmers' wives and daughters, and the domestic servants, as also is the feeding of calves and pigs. In many instances, also, the women clean out the pens, and in a few cases the cattle sheds. Industrial schoolboys are sometimes employed as 'houseboys,' to assist the maids, both with their indoor and outdoor work, but they do not usually continue such work for long, being shamed out of it by the jeers of the Welsh lads, who look upon such work as being beneath the dignity of 'men.'

"The fact that domestic servants in Carmarthenshire farms are expected to milk and feed stock, is probably one reason why young women do not take kindly to service at farmhouses. Indoor work is

\* See Historical Retrospect, p. 24.

† Cd. 25, No. 55, par. 12.

‡ Cd. 25, No. 55.

§ Cd. 25, No. 46, par. 12.

also heavier than in private houses, while the hours are exceedingly long. The investigator was informed by a meeting of farm labourers that in that particular district the female servants were the first to get up in the morning, about five a.m., that they generally retired to bed after the family, about ten p.m., and that they had very little leisure between these hours. They are usually allowed, however, one evening off in the week, and are free to attend a place of worship once, sometimes twice, on Sundays. Similar information was also given by several girls who were consulted, and who complained of the arduousness of farm labour. On the other hand, mistresses claim that the statements as to the excessive hours and the arduousness of domestic labour are greatly exaggerated, and attribute the scarcity of servant girls to the changes in the outlook and habits of people, consequent on 'too much education.' Girls now, they say, all want to be genteel, to wear slippers instead of clogs, and those who do not go away to work in shops aspire to become dressmakers. In regard to the last statement it is interesting to note that there are no fewer than 2,625 dressmakers in the county, and 580 other women engaged as milliners, seamstresses or tailors."\*

There has been a considerable migration from some districts in Carnarvon, and this has affected the women more than the men. "Most of the young women and half the young men" have "left" one district.†

In Brecon, Glamorgan, Radnor and Merioneth, women do little field work, but the relatives of farmers and domestic servants undertake duties with the stock.‡ In Radnorshire some field work is done by casual women workers.

In Anglesey, Montgomery, Denbigh and Flint, the servants undertake some field work, as in the harvest. Other women and girls are employed where potatoes and roots are grown; and in Denbigh where strawberries are grown.

The work of the farm servant is important in the northern and western counties, especially the latter. Almost everywhere there has been a tendency for women to decline work in the fields; and much of the difficulty of obtaining servants has been due to the requirement of work with the livestock.

## (2). Changes, 1914-1918.

30. *Changes in mental attitude.*--During the war no fundamental changes have occurred except as regards the organisation of special services like the Land Army, and the National Land Service Corps, which introduced for the first time in agriculture the permanent imported full-time worker in any large numbers. Conditions have been accentuated both favourably and unfavourably, without making any essential permanent difference in the

\* Cd. 25. No. 47, par. 11. † Cd. 25. No. 48, par. 8.

‡ The ratio of farmers' female relatives employed to 1,000 farmers in each of the counties is as follows:—

<i>North Wales.</i>			<i>South Wales.</i>			
Anglesey	...	...	222	Cardigan	...	443
Carnarvon	...	...	215	Radnor	...	238
Merioneth	...	...	277	Brecknock	...	302
Montgomery	...	...	304	Glamorgan	...	357
Denbigh	...	...	298	Carmarthen	...	496
Flint	...	...	298	Pembroke	...	460

factors which govern the future employment of women on the land; but the development of changes which have taken place may in the future put women in a position entirely different from that held by them prior to 1914. In particular, the failure of men to return to employment in the industry in numbers comparable to those that left to join the Services or seek other employment during the war, combined with the continued shortage of foodstuffs in the markets of the world may ensure the employment of large numbers of women who have been emergency workers, and will firmly establish the idea of employing women for jobs which they are competent to perform.

Perhaps the greatest change which occurred was that in the mental attitude of persons concerned, especially that of women in the areas in which their labour has been little used in the past. Patriotism, some economic pressure, and the re-discovery of the advantage of work in the open air (on some jobs) broke down many of the former prejudices of women. They no longer felt that work on the land was derogatory to their social standing. The permanency of this change will largely depend upon the conditions governing this work in the near future. The realisation of the shortage of labour, and perhaps some real appreciation of the danger of shortage of food supplies from 1916 onwards have led husbands and fathers to adopt a slightly less suspicious attitude to the employment of their women folk. Many employers who had no previous experience of women's labour have been forced to recognise its value when certain circumstances exist.

31. *Changes in nature of work.*—In many instances women have undertaken jobs previously regarded solely as in the sphere of men's work, but for the most part these innovations have been made by women of one of the special organisations; this is particularly true of working with horses, except in Northumberland and some other northern counties, where the women who have been regularly employed or at least could be regarded as somewhat skilled workers, have taken to horse-work. Innovations on the part of village women have been more frequent in the case of milking than in any other phase of the everyday work of the farm. This is marked in the case of some of the southern counties where women milkers were practically unknown up till 1914. On the whole, the changes in the employment of village women are simply that more women have been ready to do the jobs which have been done in former times by a few; or women in a district in which little or no woman labour was previously employed have come forward for the same jobs as were done by women in a neighbouring district. The changes in the number of women, however, have not always been favourable, for counter attractions have sometimes been the cause of a decrease in the supply of village women.

Here and there, farm servants have taken a greater part in the work of the fields, but the development in the demand for field

work by women servants has been checked by the fact that they were unwilling to add to their duties, and that the counter attraction of other employment has been strong. In some districts, however, the patriotic spirit of the times has taken them into the fields.

It is necessary to localise some of these changes.

32. *Competition for female labour.*—The reductions in the supply of village women, and also of casual workers from towns near which comparatively intensive farming is carried on, have been most marked in those areas in which special war industries have developed.\* But in the complaints of shortage of women's labour from these districts it has been difficult on occasions to distinguish between complaints of reductions in the actual supply, and complaints of reductions in the potential supply. Complaints on the latter account are not of such a serious character as those on the former, for no employer can establish a preferential right to a potential supply of labour when several employers require labour for some form of production of the urgent requirements of the nation. In certain areas it would have been difficult to establish any right to preference between the producers of milk and those of munitions.

The ironstone workings of the Lindsey Division of Lincoln attracted a large number of women, many of whom had worked on the land. The war industries of the Tyneside, and the munition factories of Cumberland proved a strong attraction to some of the women workers of the north; and also to the potential supply of labour. Where the work of women had previously been uncommon the counter attractions simply drew a potential supply of labour, without reducing the actual supply. The effect of competition of other industries was, however, not always directly felt. The munition factory attracted a domestic servant, and another girl was sought to fill her place, or a charwoman engaged, who might otherwise have been willing to take some work on the land. This was more noticeable in areas in which the former demand for domestic servants had been keen; as in some districts on the south coast.

The importance of these counter attractions will depend, mainly, upon the permanence or otherwise of industrial development in the areas in which factories and works have been established for war purposes, and upon the relations which may be established between the work and wages of women and men in the industrial sphere.

33. *Family incomes and female labour.*—Other causes of reluctance of women to take farm work are said to have been the receipt of separation allowances, and the high earnings of men in semi-industrial districts. In some parts of Norfolk the women seemed " disinclined to come out as in pre-war days, and this " fact is attributed to the separation allowances they now receive,

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\* A list of these may be seen in Cd. 24, 1919, p. 29.

" which render it unnecessary they should continue to work as " had been their custom."\* In Warwickshire, " when miners " or munition workers are making large wages . . . it is " almost impossible to persuade their wives to do any sort of work " on the land; they are too well off to make it worth their " while."†

34. *Organisation of female labour.*—But while there have been counter attractions, and some women have been unwilling to work at all, the numbers of village women willing to take work on the land have been very largely increased owing to war conditions. In 1915, small numbers of women showed willingness to undertake part-time work, and found employment with farmers. By the second year of the war the question of labour for the land was becoming acute through the enlistment of agricultural labourers. Early in 1916, the Government established, through the Board of Agriculture, and the Board of Trade, Women's Voluntary County Committees with the double object of organising the village women for both part-time labour and of urging farmers to maintain the production of their farms by using women's labour to replace that of the men who had gone. Parish and district registers of women willing to work were compiled and efforts made to bring employers in need of labour in touch with the potential supply of women workers. The following year, the Land Army was established as a force of mobile trained women working full time, and a separate Women's Branch was created at the Board of Agriculture to direct it; the Women's County Committees engaged in organising the local village women being brought under the same management.

As the need for labour increased their efforts were well repaid. In those areas where it had been the custom for women to work in the past the majority of the women employed no doubt engaged themselves for work on the customary jobs through the ordinary channels; but in many districts farmers were not accustomed to the employment of women and required encouragement in the use of their services and help in their organisation.

These war organisations were most useful in this work and in co-relating the possibilities of a local supply of labour with that of a mobile force of women who could be drafted into any area where there was a shortage. They also served a useful purpose in supplying women who were wanted for jobs out of the customary sphere of women's work, such as tractor driving, horse-work, and thatching. In most counties their activities were especially useful in finding and training women for milking. Further, the influence of the women supplied by their special organisations often created a greater willingness amongst the local women to undertake field work. This was due to example, and to the provision of leaders who organised groups of village women.

It is moreover remarkable, that the tendency to employ women

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\* Cd. 25. No. 25, par. 18.      † Cd. 25. No. 37, par. 8.

for seasonal work only was strongly marked in the demand for the women of the Land Army. The number of workers varied with the seasons, and in 1918 while only 6,480 members were employed in March, a total of nearly 10,700 was reached three months later.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

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35. *Economic functions of rural women.*—The first part of the terms of reference instructed the Sub-Committee “to consider “what economic part women can take in the development of “agriculture having particular regard to the Report of the Agri-“cultural Policy Sub-Committee” (of the Reconstruction Committee).\* This involved (1) a special consideration of some agricultural developments which may be required, but more particularly of such as are occurring or may be expected to occur within the immediate future; (2) the consideration of the conditions under which these developments may be secured most easily, and the relations of the work of women to these conditions. Moreover, it was necessary to define the term “economic,” which the Committee decided to define as “that “part in agriculture which can be taken by women with profit “to the industry and to themselves.” But while this definition limited the enquiries of the Committee to the part which is or can be taken by women in the actual work of the farm, in the cultivation of crops, attendance on livestock, and in some indoor work on the final preparation of crop and stock products such as dairywork, the importance of other aspects of the work and life of women in agricultural families cannot be neglected.

36. *Social functions of rural women.*—The home-life of the farm house and farm cottage, which is mainly the direct result of the activities of women, reacts upon the general efficiency and well-being of the farm to an extent which is not usual in the case of the home-life of persons occupied in other large industries. Many of the functions of women in rural homes are as truly economic as those exercised in the fields and byres. Indeed, many farms, especially the smaller ones, can never be profitably managed unless the home-maker is interested in the relations of the economy of the home to those of the farm and capable of making a home which shall be a stimulus rather than

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\* The Agricultural Policy Sub-Committee in their Report (Cd. 9079, par. 176) express the hope “that numbers of the women who have been working on the land during the War will wish to remain in agricultural occupations and to avail themselves of the openings which will be presented to them in the many branches of farming, such as dairying in its various forms, pig-breeding and poultry keeping,” and in the following paragraph the Committee record their agreement with the Report of the Agricultural Education Conference (Agricultural Education for Women), 1915, and state that “the local conditions which have brought about rural depopulation, bad housing, low wages, lack of prospects, affect women even more than men.”

an obstacle to the success of the business and to the personal development of those who are connected with it. And in the case of the agricultural employee, the conditions which have brought about rural depopulation—bad housing, low wages, lack of prospects, &c.—have affected women even more than men, and their discontent has largely influenced the men in their migration to the towns. A prosperous agricultural community can never be established until the women of the farms are able to take their due part in the consideration and treatment of all the influences which affect its business and life, and in particular to manage their homes in such a way as will provide the maximum of comfort, together with stimulus to personal development, with a minimum of drudgery for all persons engaged in the domestic activities. Nor can such a community arise until the women of the farms and village cottages have grasped the principles of true household economy and practised the application of them to a degree far higher than has been reached in recent years. Beyond the consideration of the functions of women in the home, and the extension of the home influence into the business and work of the farm, there is, further, the consideration of the part women of all classes should play in building up a rural social order in which the advantages of country life could be made to counterbalance the attractions of the towns. “Community betterment” is a phrase little known to women of the English villages, but it is well understood by many of the farm women of the younger English-speaking nations.

37. *Little realisation of the social importance of women.*—Some of the aspects of these broader problems were shown to the Committee in a vivid way when such subjects as that of the female farm servant were under consideration. They were of opinion, however, that as so little study of the general position of women in relation to the rural social order has been made in this country any complete survey would involve too much work and delay to be undertaken by them. The subject is nevertheless of the greatest importance, especially when it is realised that economic and social conditions in rural areas react upon each other; and that any constructive economic policy must be accompanied by a policy of developing human material through varied social agencies. And, moreover, that the actual work of women in any capacity in the farming enterprise is inevitably complicated by family and social obligations.

Although no survey of the functions of women in the family and social spheres of rural life could be undertaken the Sub-Committee are strongly of opinion that rural reconstruction must be so ordered that village life should offer sufficient inducement to women to settle or remain in country districts instead of migrating to towns. This point has, therefore, been kept constantly in prominence during the enquiries made with a view of discovering how far existing circumstances tend to produce this result and of enabling the Sub-Committee to present a considered opinion upon the final instruction laid down in their Terms of Reference, viz., “What steps (if any) should be taken

"to enable women to take the economic part in agriculture that  
"the industry requires of them."

38. *Definition of "agriculture."*—In determining the sense in which the word Agriculture as used in their Reference should be read, the Sub-Committee considered that the term should be taken to include, in addition to Afforestation and the production of Flax, such industries as deal with the direct manipulation of food products and are carried on in rural districts as distinct from town areas.

39. *Industries investigated.*—It will be seen from the following list of these industries, into the conditions of which the Sub-Committee decided to examine, that the exceptions to the above qualification are basket-making and small home industries. The decision to include the former within the scope of enquiry was owing to the fact that several forms of food products such as strawberries and raspberries partly depend upon the manufacture of baskets for their harvesting and marketing. With regard to small home industries, the Committee being aware that an enquiry into these had been entrusted to another Committee set up by the Ministry of Reconstruction, decided not to "investigate" such trades in the ordinary sense of the word but only to take them into consideration in so far as their existence or non-existence in rural areas affected the supply of women's labour in agricultural industries.

#### Farm and Woodland Production.—

- Farming (arable).
- Dairy farming.
- Cheese making.
- Market gardening.
- Flax production.
- Afforestation.
- Osier growing.

#### Industries immediately allied to Agriculture.—

- Bacon manufacture.
- Potato flour manufacture.
- Farina.
- Beetroot sugar.
- Jam making.
- Fruit pulping.
- Vegetable drying.
- Basket making.
- Small home industries.

In considering these individual subjects the Sub-Committee were concerned with three main questions:—

- (a) The extent of the demand for women's work.
- (b) The probable supply of the requisite labour.
- (c) The conditions, including the scale of wages, which affect the numbers of women who will follow some occupation in these industries.

40. *Types of farms and demand for women.*—Before dealing with these questions in relation to each phase of the farming

industry and the allied industries, it is necessary to discuss certain general considerations.

Female farm workers can be divided into two main groups—the unpaid dependants of occupiers and ordinary wage earners. The demand for the work of women in each of these separate groups is affected in different ways by various economic influences. The chief factors which influence the demand for the assistance of dependants are the type of farming followed (often the size of the holdings) and the price of hired labour. The group of employees may be divided into two classes, the female farm servant and the field worker, but there are also women attending cattle and some specially skilled workers. The demand for female farm servants, with multiple duties in the farm and home-stead, is again determined almost entirely by the size of the farm in connection with the type of farming, and by the supply and price of male labour. The same chief factors are also to be found in the demand for field workers, but their influences are not manifested in the same way. Whereas the farm servant is mainly in demand where small pastoral farms prevail, the field worker is there in least demand, and in greatest demand where fairly large, highly cultivated farms prevail, and in the market-gardening districts. Again, the high price of male labour always creates a strong demand for the farm servant on the small farms, but this is not necessarily true in the case of the larger arable farms where machinery can be used for certain extensive operations. Consequently, it appears that the demand for women in the future will be determined, in the main, by the possibility of :—

- (1) The extension of those particular branches of agriculture or types of holdings which are more dependent on the assistance of women; and

- (2) The substitution of women for men.

41. *Development and State policy.* — It is obvious that the increase or decrease of particular types of farms, or the extension or decline of certain forms of production must be influenced by Government policy. Interference with freedom of cultivation and cropping, control of prices, whether the fixing of maxima or minima, State aid in the development of small holdings, are bound to prove important factors in determining the fundamental economic conditions which govern the demand for the labour of women. In the absence of a clear policy and strong, wisely exercised action on the part of the Government, the economic influences in the world market reacting upon the position of the English farming industry as regards soil and climatic conditions, supply of capital, and the supply and nature of human material, will determine these fundamental economic conditions.

42. *Substitution of women for men.* — The substitution of women for men practically concerns the women wage earners only; and is bound up mainly with the question of wages and the use of machinery.

As regards wages, the extent of substitution will depend upon the relative efficiency and cost of the labour of regular male and

female workers; and the relative efficiency and cost of labour of regular male or female workers compared to that of casual female workers, and, possibly, of the relative efficiency and cost of casual male labour and of casual female labour.

It is almost impossible to arrive at a reliable estimate of the relative efficiency of women and men, even when working on the same job. Estimates have been made, but they vary to such an extent that no reliance should be placed upon them. The efficiency of male workers itself varies from district to district, often from farm to farm, so that there is no valid standard of comparison. In addition, the efficiency of the worker is closely bound up with the equipment and management of the farm; and as the employer is the final judge of efficiency, the decision, often a decision on individual capacities, must be left to the employers. But certain general considerations may be given.

43. *Relative value of men and women workers.*—The evidence laid before the Sub-Committee tended to show that the processes in which women excel, such as milking and feeding of young stock, &c., are of a kind that do not occupy the majority of working hours on a large number of the smaller mixed farms, and consequently it would not be economical for the employer to engage full-time women workers in the place of men upon such farms. Men can perform the duties attaching to women in addition to those of a heavier nature in the field and yard in which the woman cannot in any sense rival the man. The latter would, therefore, from an economic point of view, be more useful than a woman.

Upon more extensive farms, on the other hand, where the number of milch cows or young stock is larger, giving practically full-time employment to a worker in connection with milking and feeding only, the value of the special abilities of women in such work in addition to their particular capacity for attention to detail might induce employers in some instances to prefer them to general farm labourers for the specific processes mentioned. Another consideration likely to influence the choice of the farmer as to employing a man or a woman upon arable farms is that of the increased rate of wages. With the higher scale of payment to male labourers it appears likely that farmers will be anxious to concentrate men upon the heavier important field operations, and be unwilling to take off male workers for lighter jobs such as milking, which can be performed by a woman. These circumstances may tend to a demand for a certain number of full-time women hands, drawn either from village residents or from the imported labour market.

44. *Relative cost of labour of men and women wage earners.*—With regard to the relative cost of men and women wage earners, the same considerations as have just been mentioned would apply. Upon the smaller general mixed farms, where lighter duties cannot economically be divided from those involving physical strength and endurance, the sex capable of undertaking only the former class of work must be the more expensive to the employer when they are employed full time.

On the other hand, where the class of farming carried on permits the exclusion of the jobs specially adapted to women from the duties of the men labourers in such way as to give full-time work in connection with the former; or where it is possible to obtain local women workers willing to undertake particular part-time duties, such as milking, thus allowing the men to continue uninterrupted the heavier and most important field operations, the farmer is likely to find the employment of a woman more profitable than that of a man for the specialized work.

45. *Comparative cost of permanent and seasonal labour.*—The Committee were of opinion that the enhanced rate of minimum wage to agricultural labourers, both male and female, might well have a tendency towards effecting a revised organization of farm work resulting in a reduction of permanent staff with a correspondingly larger employment of seasonal workers.

It is possible that such reduction of permanent staff might lead to the existence of an increased supply of available male casual labour, owing to the less efficient worker not being taken on as a whole-time labourer. Were this the case, any increased demand for seasonal labour might be supplied by men.

If, on the other hand, this anticipation were proved to be unjustified by events, the surplus male labour finding permanent employment in spite of reduction of staff on some classes of farms, the increased necessity for seasonal labour brought about by improved organization might further the demand for women workers.

Other factors influencing the demand for women wage earners are the increased use of machinery and the supply of male labour.

46. *Increased use of machinery.*—Again, an increased use of machinery might tend to a diminished use of women workers. For instance, the production of a really satisfactory milking machine and its more general use would reduce the demand for women milkers, or the perfection of a machine for picking (up) potatoes would result in a decreased use of hand labour for harvesting the crop.

The stimulus to the use of machinery given by the shortage of labour during the war period has been quite marked; but women have taken jobs with machines not previously given to them in some districts, particularly with threshing machines.

47. *Supply of men labourers.*—The future supply of male labour appears to depend largely upon (1) the scale of the minimum wage adopted, (2) its relation to that given in other industries, (3) the competition offered by other industries employing male workmen, and (4) the attractions of village life as affected by the greater amenities foreshadowed by social reforms.

But women are not adequate substitutes for men for all jobs, and perhaps the most important part of the supply of male labour affecting the demand for women is that of immigrant labour, such as the Irish workers, and migratory casual labour from the towns. The work done by these classes of male labour is seasonal, and can in most cases be done by women. A cessation of the supply of male casual workers would certainly create a demand for more women.

48. *Circumstances governing the demand for the assistance of occupiers and dependants.*—Turning to the second class of women workers, the dependants of holders, and considering what factors might reasonably be expected to govern this employment in future, the following would appear to be those which will determine the demand :—

- (a) Increase in small holdings.
- (b) Profits derived from agriculture.
- (c) The price of hired labour.

49. *Increase in the number of smallholdings.*—As it is known, and generally realised, that one of the most important aspects of women's work is that of dependants of occupiers of small farms, it is regrettable that no statistics of the number of these farms are obtainable.\* But there can be no doubt that if the declared policy of the Government on the creation of smallholdings is carried out, there will be considerable increases in the numbers. Whether the creation of these holdings will leave the medium-sized farm in its present position, mainly reducing the number or size of the largest farms, the Committee are not able to say. If this is the case, the number of dependants occupied will probably increase. Should the creation of smallholdings, however, occur together with an increase in the number or size of the largest farms, the increase in the number of dependants occupied may be restricted.

The counties showing the largest proportion of smallholdings of 1 to 50 acres are those in which milk producing or market gardening are chiefly carried on, whereas areas in which the predominant type of farming is arable are those possessing the lowest number of such holdings.

The type of cultivation practised on smallholdings is specially suitable for women workers, and it appears reasonable to believe that in almost all the instances where such holdings are occupied by separate individual tenants or owners the women members of the household will take a share in the operations.

The greater facilities for obtaining small holdings now offered by the Government through the Board of Agriculture and local authorities, and the suggestion, if carried into effect, that power be granted to the authorities concerned to provide smallholdings of less than 1 acre in extent, are likely to result in an increasing number of similar tenure with a corresponding increase of women workers in connection with the same. A certain number of actual holders may be women, but it would not appear likely that many women, with the exception of a few of the educated class possessing capital of their own, will be found desirous of incurring the responsibility of farming on their own account. Profit-sharing farms or colonies of co-operative women farmers may attract some women, but the numbers involved are not likely to be very large in proportion to those working as dependants of occupiers.

50. *The effect of increased profits.*—In considering the question of the profits derived from agricultural industry as affecting the demand for women's help, the Committee were of opinion

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\* For a discussion of the statistics see Cd. 24, 1919, pp. 3, 4.

that the obtaining of a higher rate of profit might result in either of two contrary effects so far as the future work of women dependants is concerned.

On the one hand, the prospects of increased profits might induce a greater number of dependants to take personal interest in the farming occupations, through which means of which the family prosperity was heightened. On the other hand, it is possible that in some instances, more especially upon farms where a proportion of paid labour is already used, the wife or daughters of the holder might feel inclined to relinquish duties which they were willing to undertake so long as the family could ill afford a wage bill, but which with an increasing income, they might prefer to hand over to paid labour. The latter has undoubtedly been the experience of the past in the South of England, but, with altered conditions of agricultural outlook, similar effects may follow an increase of prosperity.

*51. Price of labour.*—With regard to the price of hired labour, the employment of women dependants of farmers and small holders has been largely influenced in the past by their natural and economic desire to avoid the payment of wages for such work as can be performed by members of the household concerned. The recent rise in rates of wages is likely, in the opinion of the Committee, to increase that desire. Unless profits increase, the farmer will be less willing to engage paid workers, and the work on his land will be more dependent upon the assistance of members of his own household.

Another consideration of some importance is that high wages ruling in other occupations may attract the women relatives of occupiers of land, who will desire to gain the independence offered them by employment in other industries.

Having considered the general factors in the demand for women's labour, there now remains the question of supply, and the conditions which affect the supply.

*52. Probable supply of the requisite labour.*—The question of the supply of labour cannot be treated with reference to the agricultural industry only, for the willingness of women to engage in agricultural pursuits will largely depend upon the conditions and prospects offered in other occupations.

This is true of all women who constitute a potential supply of labour, whether as dependants of occupiers or as employees, and to some extent of the women now working, or who have worked, as employees. The condition of the labour market during the war has opened up many occupations to women in a remarkable way; and it appears probable, although for some reasons it may be undesirable, that many of the positions held by women in the last three years will continue to be held by them. But whether this is true or no, there cannot be the least doubt that the main avenues to employment and residence in other than rural areas which have constituted such a big drain on the female part of the population—domestic service, service in shops, and the lower branches of the scholastic profession—will continue to exercise the full power of their attraction. In addition, there is a tendency for some manufacturing concerns which need woman

labour to move to districts in which they can take advantage of the supply of rural women; and many women have gained some experience of industrial employment in the various emergency factories established in rural and semi-rural areas during the period of the war.

53. *Numbers of women available.*—The number of women who might be available for farm and market-garden work is obviously dependent upon the conditions and circumstances attending that work. No guess at the possible number can be hazarded, even though the conditions of employment were postulated, for the circumstances which exist and may arise are too complex to be subject to numerical treatment. The number and reliability of some figures, especially of the number of village women, obtained during the war is extremely doubtful; and even if reliance could be placed upon them they do not provide any real evidence of the position when some of the reasons for war-service have disappeared. A particular criticism of these figures that should be made is that for some counties they include both the women who worked on the farms in normal times, and in others they appear to relate only to the special volunteers. And in certain counties it is to be feared that some parish registers included women of both classes, while in others they included only the volunteers.

Although no definite information can be offered as regards the probable supply of women's labour, it is very important that the conditions which influence supply should be considered.

54. *Supply of assistance of dependants.*—As regards the dependants of occupiers the chief special consideration is that of the influence which may be exerted by greater opportunities for education, and by social agencies such as Women's Institutes, in arousing greater interest in agriculture and in enforcing recognition of the life-value of work and residence in the country. The methods by which this influence may be exerted will be treated at a later stage; but it must be stated here that much of the unnecessary dulness and drudgery of the work of dependents must be abolished if there is to be any hope of retaining the services of sisters or daughters on the farm in spite of the counter attractions of other numerous occupations. This applies also, though perhaps not to the same extent, to the younger women who might be expected in the ordinary course of events, to marry the small holders and small farmers.

In some districts where very small holdings prevail the provision of some form of bye-industry may also exercise an important influence upon the attitude of daughters of cultivators, and of potential wives, to the work and life of the small farm.

55. *The supply of women employees.*—The supply of labour of women, other than the relatives of occupiers, may be best dealt with according to the class of worker, but it may be pointed out that certain general conditions have been outlined in dealing with the probable supply of labour.

56. *Skilled workers, dairymaids, &c.*—The number of women willing to become workers of a specially skilled type will partly depend, as in the case of other workers, on the conditions of

employment, and the conditions and prospects offered by other occupations. But it is a peculiarity of the supply of this class of labour that it is largely created by facilities for training and often by facilities for institutional training.

It might be added that this also applies to the demand for these workers, for the supply has to a certain extent created demand; and the supply has been dependant upon the provision and the cost of facilities for training.

*57. Farm servants.*—The most important influence on the supply of this class of women is the demand for ordinary domestic servants, and the conditions and prospects offered in urban and suburban service. There can be no doubt, whatever that the materialisation of any schemes for the improvement of the conditions of domestic service,\* such as the regulation of hours, the improvement of status, the organisation of training, and the provision of facilities for social intercourse, will appreciably affect the supply of women for farm service in the dual duties of the house and farmyard. The class of girl from which farm servants are drawn have previously been well informed on the comparative advantages and disadvantages of farm service and ordinary domestic service, and any increases in the advantages of the latter will necessarily involve some constructive effort to improve the conditions of farm service if the supply is to be maintained, to say nothing of increasing it. The reasons given for the objections to farm service during recent years are long hours, lack of amusement in the country, want of interest in the work because of long hours and drudgery, and also to some extent, lack of training for the work.

*58. Regular field workers.*—This type of woman worker is to be found, as a general rule, only in Northumberland and Durham, where the custom of women's work is well established. Here the part of these women in the labour equipment of the farm is so important that their conditions change (and improve) almost automatically with the changes in the conditions of male workers. Their work and conditions are as well defined as those of men, and consequently the rates of their wages are as easily determined and enforced as those for men. On the whole, where this type of labour is customary, the supply is good.

*59. Casual women workers.*—These are most easily dealt with in three groups (1) those who are wholly or mainly dependent upon their earnings for maintenance; (2) town casual workers partly dependent upon their earnings in agriculture for maintenance; (3) village women.

The type of casual worker who is mainly or wholly dependent upon her earnings for maintenance is found chiefly in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Kent, the London market-garden district, and in the Evesham district of Worcestershire, but she is also to be found in greater or smaller number in most areas in which market-garden crops are grown.

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\* On this subject see *Report on Domestic Service Problem.* Cmd. 67, 1919

Where women are working for the greater part of the year, and have to depend wholly or mainly on their earnings for their maintenance, it is obvious that these must be sufficient to support them in the recognised standard of life for the class to which they belong, or otherwise they will take other employment whenever it is available. But as these women often work only on piece-work jobs, or on short-time engagements for particular jobs on time-work and these frequently on different farms, with periods of slackness dependent upon the state of crops or weather, it is difficult to regulate earnings; and the fixing of rates of wages with crops in various states is not an easy matter. Often, only a basic time-rate can be determined, and the relation of the piece-rate to a time-rate on a particular job can be judged only by employer and employee.

As regards what may be called the "short-term" casual two more or less separate classes may be distinguished, the town and the village women. The town workers frequently work partly for the sake of a holiday in the country, as in the fruit plantations and hop-yards of Kent; and in cases in which this is not such an important factor as in Kent, the attraction of the open-air employment is still strong. Some of the considerations on the supply of village women given below also apply to this class. There are, however, differences. The conditions which may affect the village women often arise directly out of the state of employment in agriculture, while those which affect the town casual arise out of other industries.

Village casual women often undertake only jobs of a somewhat pleasant character during the brighter part of the year, and the chief factors in the determination of the supply are the amount of the regular family income (chiefly the earnings of the husband) and the character of the work obtainable. Of these, the current rate of wages for men, which governs the amount of the regular income of the house, is the more important.

The high price of hired labour may induce many dependants of occupiers to stay on the farms. Often they have personal interests even when they have no financial interests in the success of the business, and the high price of hired labour together with some other regulations of conditions of employment which cause difficulty in making the best use of labour on the small farm may induce occupiers to give their dependants some definite material interest in the success of the business, and thus induce them to remain. But the high price of hired labour may have the opposite effect on the supply of casual women workers.

As the earnings of the chief wage-earner increase in relation to the cost of living at a given standard the need of the extra earnings of the wife diminishes. Further, as the earnings rise in relation to a given standard of life, the standard can be raised, and this means that more services, sometimes more careful or delicate services are required of the wife. For instance, the duties of a housewife of a poor family in a small or poor cottage are more simple and easily disposed of than those of a housewife of a comparatively well-to-do family in a larger, better, cottage

in which pride can be taken, and which may be furnished with things to which more delicate attention has to be paid. In particular, there is often more laundry work, and general cleaning and polishing to be done. Moreover, a rising standard of life is sometimes accompanied by changes in feeling and mental attitude towards certain forms of work.

There are, however, reasons for believing that changes in the standard of comfort do not affect the willingness of women to work on certain jobs, of which fruit-picking may be specially noted. Much depends upon the custom and tradition of the district, the attitude of the stronger-minded and more capable women, and upon the jobs offered.

A separate case arises where increases in the family incomes occur not because of a rising rate of wages, but from the number of earners who contribute. Here the increase in income is accompanied by more work in the house, even of the commoner kinds. And should any condition arise in which more unmarried members are living in the village cottages, there will be a consequent diminution in the supply of village women for work on the land.

The work of women in relation to each phase of agricultural production, and to the allied industries which have been mentioned will now be considered.

## CHAPTER V.

### WOMEN IN RELATION TO VARIOUS TYPES OF FARMING.

#### (1) Arable Farming.

60. *English farming and livestock production.*—The outstanding feature of English agriculture is its live-stock production; and when types of farming are discussed it must always be borne in mind that in some kind of live stock production there is always a strong connection between one type and another. In the enquiry into the Agricultural Output of Great Britain, 1908, the following figures for the value of farm production in England and Wales were obtained:—

ESTIMATED VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES,  
1908.\*

	Value.		
	£		Per Cent.
Farm crops ... ... ...	40,200,000	...	31·5
Fruit, flowers, and timber ...	4,700,000	...	3·7
Animals ( <i>i.e.</i> , meat) ...	50,800,000	...	39·8
Wool ... ... ...	2,100,000	...	1·6
Dairy produce ... ... ...	25,500,000	...	20·0
Poultry and poultry produce	4,350,000	...	3·4
 <hr/>			
Total	<b>£127,650,000</b>	...	<b>100·0</b>
 <hr/>			

\* Report on the Agricultural Output of Great Britain, 1908, p. 25.

These figures relate to the production of the whole of the agricultural holdings in England and Wales, but even when selected farms are taken there are few cases, except of market gardens and farms where extensive crops of market vegetables are grown, in which the receipts from live-stock and live-stock products do not amount to one-half, or more, of the total. A Committee of the Agricultural Wages Board, which examined the accounts of some 26 "tenant" and 21 "home" farms for the five years 1913-14 to 1917-18 found the following receipts per acre, with the percentages, for 1913-14\* :—

#### SOURCES OF RECEIPTS ON ENGLISH FARMS, 1913-14.

	Twenty-six Tenant Farms.			Twenty-one Home Farms.		
	Value. £ s. d.	Per cent.		Value. £ s. d.	Per cent.	
Live-stock ... ... ...	4 16 6	62·2		2 17 8	57·1	
Dairy produce ... ...	16 2	10·3		13 0	12·8	
Corn and other crops ...	1 19. 1	25·2		15 11	15·7	
Other receipts ... ...	3 6	2·3		14 6	14·3	
Total	£7 15 3	100·0		£5 1 1	100·0	

On these tenant farms the proportion under the plough was higher than the average for England and Wales. Consequently, when types of farming are referred to, the description applies to the character of the land rather than to the nature of the chief products; and although the work of women in livestock production is important, it is rather in relation to that type of production on the smaller pasture farms than on the larger arable farms.

61. *Developments and relation to demand for women.*—In considering the relations of women to various types of farming, it may be said that, unless the types of farming were changing or developing, the future relations of women to them could only be those which have existed in the past, unless women themselves change, or there are considerable changes in the number or character of the supply of male workers. That women themselves have changed to some extent has been stated in a previous section (III., par. 30); and the changes in the supply of male labour have also been indicated. Movements in the industry itself are not easily discovered, for changes in farming practice and organisation always come gradually and slowly.

62. *Increase in arable area.*—The importance of the direct products of arable farming in the food supply of the nation, and the value of having land in such a state that these products can be obtained, has been clearly realised by the public during the last five years; but the popular idea of the increase in arable cultiva-

\* See Cd. 76, 1919, pp. 11-16.

tion has been to a certain extent an exaggerated one. This exaggeration applies, in a minor degree, to the supposed effect of the increased cultivation on the employment of women.

The total area of arable land in England and Wales in 1913 was about 11,058,000 acres, and in 1918 the total reached was nearly 12,400,000 acres, the increase during the five years being 1,340,000 acres, or 12 per cent. However, some rather important changes have occurred. The smallest proportionate increases in the area under the plough have been recorded in Eastern, North Eastern, and South Eastern Counties, where this type of cultivation was most prominent in pre-war period. The largest proportionate increases have occurred in the North Western Counties of England and in Wales, where pasture farming was previously in a position of strong predominance. The following table shows the increases in each of the Divisions into which the country is divided for statistical purposes :—

#### INCREASE IN ARABLE LAND IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1913-1918.

Division and description.	Arable land.		Increase. Acres.	Increase per cent. (Approx.)
	1913.	1918.		
<b>ENGLAND.</b>				
I.A. Eastern Counties—Arable	1,934,817	2,034,252	99,435	5
I.B. North Eastern — Arable with sheep ... ... ...	2,222,122	2,311,564	89,442	4
II.A. South Eastern—Arable with fruit and market gar- dening ... ... ...	1,190,961	1,308,793	117,832	10
II.B. East Midland—Cattle rearing and feeding ... ...	1,008,198	1,132,051	123,853	12
III.A. West Midland—Cattle and sheep rearing and milking ...	997,436	1,125,588	128,152	13
III.B. South Western—Cattle and sheep rearing and milking	1,131,884	1,298,453	166,569	15
IV.A. Northern—Sheep rearing and feeding, and cattle feeding ... ... ...	988,530	1,150,438	161,908	16
IV.B. North Western—Milking and cattle rearing ... ...	887,901	1,102,540	214,639	24
<b>WALES.</b>				
V.A. Northern—Stock raising	317,523	425,861	108,338	34
V.B. Southern—Stock raising	378,861	509,100	130,239	34
Total—England and Wales	11,058,233	12,398,640	1,340,407	12

As regards the employment of women, this distribution of the increase has doubtless been of some advantage, for the greatest proportionate increases have occurred, on the whole, in those areas in which the possible supply of women was greatest; and the smallest proportionate increases have occurred in those areas in which comparatively large numbers of women were working in

the fields in normal times, and where, consequently, there were smaller numbers of women available to supplement the normal supply of labour. But while this is the case, the increases in the amount of land under the plough have not substantially changed the character of the farming in any one of the Divisions. This is clearly indicated by the following table:—

INCREASE IN PERCENTAGE OF ARABLE LAND TO TOTAL CULTIVATED AREA, 1913-1918.

Division.	1913.			1918.		
	Total Cultivated Area.	Arable land.	Per cent. of Arable to Total.	Total Cultivated Area.	Arable land.	Per cent. of Arable to Total.
<i>England.</i>						
I.A. Eastern ...	2,924,778	1,934,817	66	2,922,065	2,034,252	70
I.B. N. Eastern	3,263,642	2,222,122	68	3,261,710	2,311,564	71
II.A. S. Eastern	2,667,176	1,190,961	44	2,621,610	1,308,793	50
II.B. E. Midland	2,873,643	1,008,198	35	2,871,892	1,132,051	40
III.A. W. Midland	3,145,113	997,436	31	3,121,036	1,125,588	36
III.B. S. Western	3,140,109	1,131,884	36	3,139,359	1,298,453	41
IV.A. Northern ...	3,163,647	988,530	31	3,145,791	1,150,438	36
IV.B. N. Western	3,196,687	887,901	28	3,178,577	1,102,540	34
<i>Wales.</i>						
V.A. Northern ...	1,129,929	317,523	28	1,122,718	425,861	38
V.B. Southern ...	1,624,658	378,861	23	1,602,754	50,100	31
Total ...	27,129,382	11,058,233	40	26,987,512	12,398,640	46

Although the arable land of England and Wales is now more evenly distributed than was formerly the case, the Eastern and North Eastern Counties still retain their position as the predominantly arable areas. This is partly due to the character of the surface and conditions of soil and climate, and no forecast can be made as to the permanence of the increases in those areas in which the proportion of arable is still low. These conditions previously led to the development of pasture farming.

63. *Changes in cropping.*—The employment of women on arable land, however, is affected as much by the system of cropping as by the extent of cultivation. Should any system be developed in which the importance of the "root-break" is reduced to a minimum, and the cropping mostly limited to cereals, clover and rotation grasses and bare fallow, the need of women is also reduced to a minimum, for in the operations connected with such a system there is the greatest scope for tractive power, horse or motor, and least scope for manual work.

Taking the chief movements in crops on farms during the period of the war, the general tendency has been towards a development

of such a system. The area under cereals shows large increases (due to war conditions), the area under legumes and roots for cattle has declined, and the area under fallow has increased. The acreage under potatoes, which cannot be classed with ordinary farm root crops, has increased.

	1914.	1918.
	Thousand Acres.	Thousand Acres.
Cereal crops ...	... 5,242	... 6,980
Root crops* ...	... 1,615	... 1,424
Bare fallow ...	... 340	... 408
Potatoes ...	... 462	... 634

The following Table shows the annual changes in the area under each crop in increase or decrease per cent. from the ten years' previous average.

**MOVEMENTS IN CROPS ON FARMS.**  
**ANNUAL DIFFERENCE FROM PREVIOUS TEN YEARS' AVERAGE.**

Crops.	Increase (+) or Decrease (-) Per Cent.				
	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
Wheat ...	+ 7·0	+25·0	+ 7·5	+ 6·6	+ 39·5
Barley or bare ...	- 0·3	-17·6	- 9·3	+ 0·8	+ 3·9
Oats ...	- 8·0	+ 1·2	+ 1·0	+ 9·5	+ 34·2
Mixed corn ...	—	—	—	—	—
Rye ...	+ 6·7	- 6·2	+ 7·1	+18·2	-104·5
Beans ...	+ 6·6	- 5·1	-16·5	-24·5	- 7·2
Peas ...	- 1·4	-24·2	-32·2	-19·2	- 5·4
Potatoes ...	+ 6·8	+ 6·5	- 1·6	+16·7	+ 42·5
Turnips and swedes	- 6·3	-15·6	-13·4	- 8·5	- 13·1
Mangolds ...	- 0·6	- 5·7	-14·0	-10·5	- 6·4
Cabbage ...	-12·9	-15·6	-19·3	-31·5	- 28·5
Kohl-rabi ...	- 6·9	+ 6·2	-14·0	-12·7	- 18·8
Rape ...	-12·4	-16·4	- 7·0	-13·9	- 17·2
Vetches or tares ...	+ 2·9	- 9·1	-25·0	-31·1	- 42·4
Lucerne ...	- 8·2	- 8·9	- 6·8	-13·4	- 29·3
Hops ...	- 7·5	- 9·8	-15·5	-52·3	- 52·2
Small Fruit ...	+ 2·1	- 2·8	- 4·2	- 5·9	- 13·8
Rotation grasses, etc.	-13·8	-12·3	- 1·8	- 4·2	- 18·3
Other crops ...	+25·6	+18·3	+43·3	+12·6	+ 24·8
Bare fallow ...	+ 4·8	- 2·2	+34·6	+ 9·3	+ 22·0

The increase in cereals may not be altogether permanent, but there can be little doubt that if the guaranteed prices are maintained at a remunerative level there will be a very strong tendency to maintain a higher proportion of land under wheat and oats than in the pre-war times. However, a temporary check to the production of cereals may be given by the necessity for cleaning the land and allowing it to recuperate after the extensive cereal cropping during the last four years.

The increase in potatoes has been continuous, except in 1916, at least since 1912; and much of the increase may be expected to become permanent.

\* Turnips and swedes, mangolds, cabbage, kohl-rabi, rape.

The decrease in the root crops has been continuous since 1913; and that in clover and rotation grasses at least since 1911.

The increase in bare fallow has been continuous, except in 1915, since 1913.

The increase in "other crops"\*\* has been continuous during the whole of the war period, and had indeed begun in 1911. As these crops are important in relation to the employment of women the acreages since 1911 may be given:—

AVERAGE UNDER MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.

1911 ... ...	132,189	1915 ... ...	145,910
1912 ... ...	132,233	1916 ... ...	182,784
1913 ... ...	132,664	1917 ... ...	151,610
1914 ... ...	148,625	1918 ... ...	172,094

Some of these crops are more commonly grown on comparatively small holdings, and will be dealt with in connection with market gardening, but the respective acreages of each crop in 1914 and 1918 may be given. The crops may be divided into two groups: those which are frequently grown on large arable farms in certain districts, and those which are more or less confined to small holdings, although in individual cases any of these crops may be found on holdings of all sizes.

MISCELLANEOUS CROPS ON LARGE AND SMALL FARMS.

Arable Farms.	1914.	1916.	1918.
Carrots ... ...	10,768	10,225	11,852
Buckwheat ... ...	3,038	3,299	7,256
Brussels sprouts ... ...	11,574	10,831	10,687
Mustard for seed ...	18,731	51,907	9,999
Mustard for fodder	13,132	13,814	14,952
Flax ... ...	623	911	18,404
Sugar beet ... ...	2,334	151	671

SMALL HOLDINGS AND MARKET GARDENS.

Onions ... ...	3,479	4,728	8,065
Cauliflower or broccoli ... ...	7,925	8,604	9,239
Celery ... ...	5,471	3,515	2,996
Rhubarb ... ...	6,655	6,846	5,747

The production of some of these crops, as mustard for seed, celery, and rhubarb, has been discouraged during the last two years.†

Mustard for seed may be grown to the extent of the pre-war crop in the near future. The acreage under onions, particularly on the larger farms, on the other hand, may be considerably affected by the quantity and price of imported supplies.

\* Carrots, onions, buckwheat, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, mustard for seed, mustard for fodder, flax, sugar beet, celery, rhubarb.

† Flax and sugar beet may be treated as separate industries.

But taking the chief kinds of crops, the cereals have increased, the ordinary root crops show a tendency to decline, and potatoes have shown a big increase, part of which may be permanent. Bare fallow has increased and clover and rotation grasses have increased. It is possible that some changes will be shown in the near future, and that root crops for cleaning purposes may show an increase; but as the number of sheep is declining it is improbable that any long continued increase will occur.

As regards the increase in the demand for women in connection with arable crops it appears that as far as the extent of the crops themselves is concerned the only increase likely to have any considerable influence on demand is that in potatoes. With other crops, increase in demand is dependant upon the increased use of manual labour, as for hoeing and weeding, or the substitution of women for men in certain operations.

64. *Women's work on arable farms.*—The work on large arable farms appears suitable (except on the heaviest land) for the physical capacities of women. The Committee, however, are of opinion that the assistance of women is not necessary for the fullest development of these farms, with the exception of their seasonal work in hoeing and weeding, singling and lifting roots, and setting and picking-up potatoes. And the number of permanent male labourers employed upon large arable farms cannot be sufficient to cope with such seasonal work during the busiest times of the year. To employ the specialised skilled men in these necessary tasks on the larger farms would be uneconomical.

The Committee take the view that, as a result of the higher rate of wages for men, there will be a tendency to economise the use of male labour as much as possible; and that with a revised organisation it may be found that fewer regular hands will be required. In this case, there will be a correspondingly greater demand for casual labour, both male and female.

65. *Machinery.*—The demand for casual labour, however, will be influenced by the use of machinery. There are now machines available for almost all the operations of harvesting and stacking, though some operations as stooking, loading and handling sheaves on the stack are still only to be done by hand. But on the large farms where machines can be used economically, and in good harvest seasons, the machines have eliminated a large part of the demand for casual labour. The extension of use of tractor power in the harvesting on the larger farms may still further facilitate operations, and reduce the demand for casual harvest labour. Still, no adequate machines are available for singling and lifting roots, for setting and picking-up potatoes and similar work. And the horse-hoes leave much scope for manual labour in cleaning roots where a high degree of cleanliness and regularity of crop are required.

66. *Regular labour of women.*—The position in parts of Northumberland shows that women can take a large share in the operations on arable farms, but the number of women who may

find more or less regular employment on farms of this character will depend upon the number showing special aptitude for this work. And if the experience of the past may be trusted as a guide for the future, there is little probability of anything like the Northumbrian system extending in the greater part of England.

67. *Casual labour.*—However, casual labour will be required for some operations in summer, and in smaller numbers for operations, such as sacking potatoes, in the winter. The demand for women in these operations will be qualified to some extent by the supply of male casual labour, both resident and migratory.

68. *Irish migratory labour.*—The change in the supply of Irish migratory labourers during the war is well known, but the fact that this supply has been falling off for some years has not been so prominent. “The number of persons who migrate each year for agricultural work has fallen off very considerably in recent years, decreasing from about 32,000 in 1900 to about 13,000 in 1915.”\* The numbers that migrated in each of the ten years 1906 to 1915 were probably about as follows:—

IRISH MIGRANT LABOURERS.\*

1906	...	25,000	1911	...	15,500
1907	...	24,000	1912	...	16,000
1908	...	22,500	1913	...	15,000
1909	...	20,500	1914	...	13,000
1910	...	18,500	1915	...	13,000

And in considering the future prospects of the supply of Irish migratory labour, it must be remembered that there has been a considerable increase in the amount of land under the plough in Ireland, and that if much of this remains permanent it may affect the supply. From 1916 to 1918 the following increases were shown:—

INCREASE IN CROPS IN IRELAND.

		Acres.	Per cent.
Corn crops	...	626,942	48
Green crops	...	157,388	16
Flax	...	51,901	57
Fruit	...	2,936	19
<hr/>			
Total	...	839,167	35
<hr/>			

\* Report relating to Irish Agricultural Labourers, Cd. 8036, 1916.

† In 1913, 6,159 migratory labourers came to England, and of these 76 per cent. came from Co. Mayo, and 22 per cent. from other counties in Connaught; the remaining 2 per cent. coming from the other three provinces.

“The labourers that migrate to England practically all come from Connaught. Considerable numbers begin to cross via Dublin from the middle of March onwards, though the great exodus is in June; and they remain until November, and in some cases up to Christmas. The ‘Connaught’ men follow a considerable itinerary during summer and autumn. After haymaking in Lancashire and Yorkshire, they find further employment in these counties in turnip-hoeing, etc., and then move to Lincolnshire and North Cambridgeshire for the corn harvest; and from thence to Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire for potato digging. In some cases however, men remain on the same farms for the greater part of the year.” Report relating to Irish Agricultural Labourers, 1913. Cd. 7418, 1914.

But whether or not the future supply of Irish workers reaches the pre-war numbers, there is no reason whatever to believe that these will be exceeded. Consequently, any extra supply of casual labour required will have to be found amongst native workers. The demand arising merely from the cessation of the Irish supply, could not, however, be very large.

69. *Casual male workers.*—The other possible supply of casual labour is that of men, whether of the vagrant or semi-vagrant class, or of residents. While the employers on large arable farms may find it possible to make reductions in the staffs of regular labour, there is no guarantee that the men displaced will stay in the locality for casual work. Much depends upon the state of employment in other industries, both local and distant.

70. *Demand for women's casual labour.*—The Committee are therefore of opinion that a larger number of women may be required as seasonal workers than were employed in 1914, but that the extent of the demand for their services depends upon the acreage kept under the plough in future years, and to some extent upon the system of cropping, and upon the supply of male casual workers which may be occasioned by the higher rate of pay for permanent workers. The majority of the women available to meet any such demand will be the women of the villages; but in some districts others may be obtained from the neighbouring towns.

## (2) Stock Farming and Dairying.

71. *Tendencies of live-stock farming.*—The recent changes in the systems of live-stock farming, like those in arable farming, have been mostly due to war conditions. But, on the whole, the changes have been merely the continuations of those occurring before 1914, and future reversions of the movements may only be temporary. In the case of dairy stock the following figures show the position :—

### CCWS AND HEIFERS IN MILK AND IN CALF.

				Thousands.
1894-98	...	...	...	2,084
1899-1903	...	...	...	2,171
1904-8	...	...	...	2,293
1909-13	...	...	...	2,340
1914-18	...	...	...	2,478
1918	...	...	...	2,578

In the case of sheep, the total number of all classes in England and Wales has, on the whole, been declining since 1912.

### SHEEP.

		Thousands.		Thousands.	
1911	...	19,330	1915	...	17,522
1912	...	18,053	1916	...	17,951
1913	...	17,130	1917	...	17,170
1914	...	17,260	1918	...	16,475

A continuation of the decline in the acreage under roots may be expected to be attended by a decline in the number of sheep as in the previous agricultural history of this country.

The changes in the number of pigs are largely due to the shortage of imported feeding stuffs, and restrictions on the use of home-grown corn during the later period of the war; but they are not altogether due to these causes. Decreases in the quantity of milk used on farms for making butter and cheese have a considerable effect on the number of pigs reared and fattened, and as the whole-milk trade extends, without a corresponding increase in the total supply, the pig industry is to some extent discouraged. However, the total of the forces which influence farmers in the breeding and rearing of pigs are so complex that it is almost impossible to predict future movements. An increase in the number of small holdings will, however, be almost certain to lead to an increase in the stock of pigs kept on the land which is converted. The following figures show the number of pigs enumerated in recent years:—

#### PIGS.

	Thousands.		Thousands.
1911 ... ...	2,651	1915 ... ...	2,420
1912 ... ...	2,216	1916 ... ...	2,168
1913 ... ...	2,102	1917 ... ...	1,918
1914 ... ...	2,481	1918 ... ...	1,697

Amongst the cattle, other than milch cattle, those above two years old show a tendency to decline in numbers, while the total number of these cattle is, on the whole, increasing. The following are the numbers of "other cattle" recorded in recent years:—

#### ALL STORE CATTLE.

	Thousands.		Thousands.
1911 ... ...	3,521	1915 ... ...	3,630
1912 ... ...	3,494	1916 ... ...	3,786
1913 ... ...	3,452	1917 ... ...	3,762
1914 ... ...	3,393	1918 ... ...	3,622

The slight tendency to decline shown in the numbers of those cattle "two years and above," which is not important, may be due to the recently growing custom of fattening at a comparatively early age. The numbers are as follows:—

#### CATTLE TWO YEARS AND ABOVE.

	Thousands.		Thousands.
1911 ... ...	1,128	1915 ... ...	994
1912 ... ...	1,112	1916 ... ...	1,068
1913 ... ...	1,151	1917 ... ...	1,094
1914 ... ...	952	1918 ... ...	1,001

The total number of all cattle (including cows, &c.), however, is increasing.

#### TOTAL NUMBER OF CATTLE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

	Thousands.		Thousands.
1911 ... ...	5,914	1915 ... ...	6,064
1912 ... ...	5,842	1916 ... ...	6,216
1913 ... ...	5,717	1917 ... ...	6,227
1914 ... ...	5,878	1918 ... ...	6,200

A summary of the movements is given by a statement of the annual changes from the average of the previous ten years, as in the following Table:—

MOVEMENT IN STOCKS ON FARMS.

ANNUAL DIFFERENCE FROM PREVIOUS TEN YEARS' AVERAGE.

	Increases (+) or Decreases (-) Per Cent.					
	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
Total Horses ...	-14·4	-15·2	-19·5	-11·7	-7·6	-5·0
CATTLE.						
Cows and Heifers in milk ...	-1·8	+ 7·2	+ 4·0	+ 3·0	-0·8	+ 0·7
Cows and Heifers in calf but not in milk					+20·8	+33·6
Heifers in calf ...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Cattle two years and above ... ..	+ 2·2	-15·4	-10·3	-2·4	+ 0·8	-7·4
One year and under two ... ..	-1·8	-1·3	+ 8·7	+14·0	+10·8	+ 8·0
Under one year ...	-0·4	+ 9·9	+14·9	+13·7	+ 9·2	+ 4·7
Total Cattle	-0·7	+ 1·6	+ 4·4	+ 6·4	+ 5·9	+ 4·6
SHEEP.						
Ewes kept for breeding ... ..	-8·1	-5·9	-5·3	-2·6	-5·0	-9·8
Other sheep—one year and above ... ..	-14·0	-19·6	-9·5	-5·8	-6·3	-16·3
Under one year ...	-8·6	-4·6	-6·0	-3·7	-11·0	-8·5
Total Sheep	-9·6	-8·3	-6·4	-3·7	-7·7	-10·6
PIGS.						
Sows kept for breeding ... ..	-17·8	+ 2·4	-9·6	-13·7	-21·6	-7·7
Other Pigs ... ..	-13·8	+ 3·1	+ 3·2	-8·9	-19·6	-30·5
Total Pigs	-14·3	+ 3·0	+ 1·4	-9·6	-19·9	-27·4

The only changes which are likely to have any effect upon the demand for women's labour is that in the increase on the number of milch cattle, and, in a lesser degree, that of the increase in the younger groups of store cattle. For amongst types of stock farming, their chief work is done on dairy farms, and on those small pasture farms devoted to stock rearing. With the older stores and with feeding cattle they are little occupied, nor is there any great probability of an increase in the demand for women on the stock-feeding farms of the East Midland counties, or, for instance, in the store and fat stock-yards of the big arable farms of the Eastern Counties.

The connection of women with this type of farming is rather to be found in the seasonal work on the root-crops grown for cattle.

72. *Development of dairy farming.*—There is no doubt whatever that an extension of this industry would be of national advantage. The industry is slowly growing, but the movement is not so rapid as the requirements of the nation demands.

The following table indicates the course of production of milk and dairy products in Great Britain during the last 45 years:—

SUPPLY OF MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS.

	1871.	1914.	Increase per cent.
Population ... ... ...	26,100,000	41,700,000	60
Number of Cows and Heifers ...	2,091,000	2,937 000	40
Values of imported dairy products ... ... ...	£10,280,000	£38,203,000	270

The last of these figures relates to the whole of the United Kingdom, but the importation of dairy products into Ireland has always been very small.\*

"From the consumer's point of view there is ample room for an increased production of milk in the country. The large rise in the value of imported dairy products during the last 45 years (see above) shows that there is a wide field in which dairy products made in this country could supplant imported products. Moreover, during the two years before the war, and even earlier, there were signs of a shortage of liquid milk in the winter, at least in London and some other large towns; and it is probable that war conditions will have encouraged the consumption of dairy products in place of meat. In any case, liquid milk is one of the cheapest foods generally available."†

73. *Women's work on dairy farms.*—As regards the relation of women to dairy farming, the Committee are of the opinion that this industry specially needs the assistance of women in order to reach its fullest development. In particular, their assistance will be required for:—

- (a) Milking, whether as whole or part-time workers.
- (b) Rearing and care of stock.
- (c) Cheese-making.

In the past, women have been employed as milkers in the greatest numbers in those parts of England, and in Wales, where the relatives of the occupiers and domestic servants take charge of the milch cattle. During the war, however, numbers of women have been employed full-time in charge of cows, together with milking, in parts of the country in which these duties were previously done solely by men. In other districts village women have been employed part-time solely as milkers, with considerable success.

Evidence as to the advisability of obtaining the assistance of women in this connection was brought before the Committee. Women often obtain better results from their handling of milch cattle, both as to quantity and quality of milk produced, and as to the general condition of the herds. In the same way, women are frequently more successful in dealing with young store stock

\* Memorandum on the Milk Supply drawn up by the Milk Control Board of the Ministry of Food. (Milk 6, 1919).

† *Ibid.*

than are the average male workers; and on the smaller farms the handling of calves and the younger stock is necessarily directly connected with milking and the care of milch cattle. Replies to the enquiry issued by the Sub-Committee\* showed that of the 264 employers who expressed their intention of employing women after the War 139 proposed to employ them as milkers and 69 in connection with various kinds of stock work.

The extent to which women will be required as milkers and stock rearers depends upon:—

- (a) The number of women required in any substitution for men;
- (b) Any increase in the total number of cows kept.

But it is obvious that these two factors may be combined, if not generally, at least in some cases.

*74. Substitution of women for men.*—Assuming that the industry remains stationary, or develops very slowly, it appears probable that an increased number of women may be in demand as a result of the institution of the weekly half-holiday for regular male workers; also as a result of any decrease in the number of permanent farm-hands occasioned by a revision of the distribution of farm work resulting from an actual shortage of male labour, or as necessitated by the higher scale of wages for men.

The half-holiday, and the necessity for specialising male labour in the heavier work of the farm, or with horses and machines, will create a demand for part-time milkers, who will attend for the milking in the morning and evening. In some districts the services of this type of worker have been in greater demand than the available supply was sufficient to meet, and there appears to be every probability that such demand will become more urgent in the future.

*75. The farm servant on dairy farms.*—There is strong evidence from Wales, and from the North-Western counties of England that the work of the farm servant in milking and attending young stock is essential to the success of the small farms. Male labour is scarce, and even if the supply was fairly good, the high rates of pay make it uneconomical to employ full-time outdoor workers with the small numbers of stock in the byres of these farms. But with a shortage in supply and high rates of pay combined it is highly important to the economical working of the holding that the assistance of this class of women worker should be obtainable.

*76. Development and increased demand for women.*—The development of the industry and the increase in the number of cows kept depends partly upon the financial results of the business compared with those obtainable in other branches of agricultural production. At present there is no reason to fear that dairy farming will not maintain its position against whatever attractions may be offered by other types. But the future development depends upon such an organisation of the supply and distribution of whole milk as will remove some fears held by milk

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\* See Appendix.

producers, and to stimulate development. Whether they are justified or not, certain fears are indulged in with regard to the effect of combinations in the wholesale handling of milk; and while it is important that the supply and distribution of whole milk should be organised, it is essential that the organisation should be such as will win the confidence of the producers in regard to its effect on the steady demand for milk at a profitable price.

The education of the public in regard to the value of clean milk to a point at which it will realise that quality in milk is worth paying for would undoubtedly stimulate the production of better milk, and would lead to the employment of women in the processes involved in its production.

77. *Skilled workers on dairy farms.*—Cheese-making will be dealt with later, but it is necessary to note that dairy farming offers some opportunity for skilled workers. It is possible that the demand for skilled dairymaids on "home farms," whether as single women who specialise in this work, or as wives of bailiffs or foremen, may increase to some extent. In addition, the industry may possibly offer a few posts to women as milk-recorders.

78. *Improvement of buildings desirable.*—It is necessary to state, however, that the increased employment of women in milking and attending cattle would be facilitated by improvements in the byres and yards. Many of those now existing make work more arduous and unattractive than is at all necessary, and moreover, lead to a great waste of energy. With good modern buildings it is possible that in some cases regular women employees would be fully capable of taking practically entire charge of herds.

79. *Field work on dairy farms.*—The field-work of casual women on dairy farms does not differ in essentials from that of this type of worker on arable farms. But the demand for field-workers in connection with dairy farming will largely depend upon the extent to which the system of growing roots for cows and the soiling system is carried on. Any development of the soiling system would lessen the demand for seasonal field-workers, but might increase the demand for workers in the sheds, where they will also undertake milking; but at present there are few signs of the development of the soiling system in this country.

80. *Cheese-making.*—There has been a considerable revival of interest in cheese-making not only during the war, but also in the years immediately preceding 1914. It is, however, somewhat difficult to give any adequate reason for this revival prior to 1914. The average prices of English cheese had not risen more rapidly than those of the other forms of produce of the farm. The following are the index numbers of prices of English cheese given in the Agricultural Statistics, compared with the index numbers for price of milk, and the general index numbers

for prices of all farm products:—

	<i>Cheese.</i>	<i>Milk.</i>	<i>General Index number.</i>
1906-8	...	100	100
1909	...	96	99
1910	...	95	104
1911	...	105	106
1912	...	110	112
1913	...	101	112
1914	...	109	111

Nor were there any considerable changes in the total supplies of imported cheese, although there were changes in the quantities obtained from various sources. In the years 1909 to 1914 the total imports of cheese were as follows:—

#### IMPORTS OF CHEESE (INCLUDING MARGARINE CHEESE).

	Cwts.
1909	2,391,796*
1910	2,457,912
1911	2,348,326
1912	2,309,082
1913	2,297,346
1914	2,433,864

There was, however, some decrease in supplies of American and Canadian cheese, which come into more direct competition with home-made cheeses. The standard cheeses of Canada and the United States were in great demand by working-class purchasers, who do not so readily take to the greater variety of small cheeses imported from the Continent of Europe. But while imports from Canada and the United States were falling, those from New Zealand were rising.

#### IMPORTS OF CHEESE FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES.

	<i>Canadian.</i>	<i>American.</i>	<i>New Zealand.</i>
	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.
1910	1,607,064	38,247	453,785
1911	1,473,275	150,321	397,845
1912	1,352,570	21,227	543,917
1913	1,293,768	22,449	547,182
1914	1,167,778	31,390	742,419

The increase in imports from New Zealand from 1911 onwards did not compensate for the loss of American and Canadian supplies in the same periods, and it is probable that this loss,

\* Previous to 1909 there was, however, some decline in the quantity of cheese imported:—

	Cwts.		Cwts.
1900	2,718,010	1905	1,942,706
1901	2,592,503	1906	2,639,985
1902	2,547,030	1907	2,373,719
1903	2,694,983	1908	2,307,208
1904	2,556,294	1909	2,391,796

Statistical abstract : Cd. 8128, 1915.

together with the small increase in the price of English butter, was responsible for the revival of interest in cheese-making. The following are the prices of English butter during the ten years before the war:—

AVERAGE PRICES OF ENGLISH BUTTER (PER 12 LBS.).

	<i>First Class.</i>			<i>Second Class.</i>			
	s.	d.		s.	d.		
1905	...	...	...	13	3	12	2
1906	...	...	...	14	3	13	0
1907	...	...	...	13	10	12	7
1908	...	...	...	14	1	13	0
1909	...	...	...	14	0	12	10
1910	...	...	...	14	2	13	0
1911	...	...	...	14	5	13	5
1912	...	...	...	14	6	13	7
1913	...	...	...	14	6	13	6
1914	...	...	...	14	7	13	7

However, an improvement in the demand for English cheese, and some realisation of the comparative economy of making cheese and making butter, synchronised more or less with the fruition of the efforts to prove the value of technical education, or, at least, the absorption of knowledge of improved methods, in the dairy industry before the beginning of the war.

The position during the last four years does not require recapitulation. It is necessary, however, to draw attention to the fact that the regulation of prices has led rather to the production of recognised grades of cheeses, than to that of special qualities, or of specialities. This has given an opportunity to the new makers of small quantities of English cheese to sell their product at prices equal to those realised by the established cheese-makers. And so long as the public could obtain cheese it was not much concerned with small differences in quality. The extension of cheese-making in the small farm districts has therefore been due, to some extent, to particularly favourable conditions for cheese made in small quantities, with a low degree of standardisation.

The permanence of the increase in cheese-making on small farms will depend somewhat upon the removal of restrictions, which will allow the larger and longer established makers to return to the production of the better grades, and on the quantity and price of imported supplies. But there can be no doubt that as the ordinary conditions of the trade are restored, the merchants will require cheeses of a reliable standard, and if this cannot be obtained by small makers their products will be marketed at a grave disadvantage. This does not apply, of course, to some districts in Wales and Durham, where a strictly local market for cheese can be found; although some standardisation is everywhere desirable.

There is no definite information regarding the relative costs of producing cheese in the three most important exporting countries, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, and in England. The same is true of the future cost of transport of

imported cheese. But there is some ground for the opinion that costs of producing cheese in New Zealand have not risen in the same proportions as in the other exporting countries and in England; and that imports from New Zealand may be expected to show further increases.

But the chief question with regard to cheese-making on small farms is, what progress will be made in co-operative factory production? This is also important with regard to the position of some of the larger farms on which cheese is made, but in this case the question is not so urgent. At present there are signs of a strong development of co-operative production of cheese, as also of the organisation of the supply of whole milk which may lead to the factory production of cheese from the surpluses of milk which may occur. Should these developments become important, the work of women on the cheese-making farms will be correspondingly limited to the ordinary work of women as milkers and attendants on stock.

In inaccessible districts the collection of milk for the factory production of cheese, co-operative or otherwise, presents practically the same difficulties as the collection for the whole milk trade; and, therefore, the production of cheese in these districts will still be carried on.

Wherever this is the case, the assistance of women will be required; but, as small farms usually prevail in these districts, the type of woman worker required will be that of the occupier's relative and the female farm servant. Cheese-making on these farms is quite a seasonal occupation, and even during the cheese-making season the work occupies only a part of the day.

The establishment of cheese factories as such, or of milk-collecting stations converting surplus milk into cheese, under whatever form of organisation (by private firm, co-operative society, or State enterprise) will tend to diminish the number of private cheese-makers on dairy farms, while slightly increasing the number of wage-earning cheese-makers employed in factories or depots. The net effect of any such extensive development would be to reduce the total number of cheese-makers. Moreover, while there has been a decided tendency to appoint women as cheese-makers in factories during the war, it may be that the pre-war preference for men in factory cheese-making will be reverted to, especially where large quantities of milk are handled. Women's work in many of these factories might therefore be limited mainly to the unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. On the whole, it appears that there will be a tendency towards greater production of cheese in factories; and that the demand for women will be limited, even if it does not diminish.

There remains the question of soft cheese-making. As far as farm production is concerned, this phase of the industry is largely dependent upon local demands or upon a special class of customer. It is, therefore, difficult to indicate any future prospects. Where there is a demand, however, the price is usually remunerative; and the return per gallon of milk is

greater than that obtained from making either butter or hard cheese. Should the demand for soft cheese increase to any great extent, the production would probably be carried on in factories. Otherwise, only the relatives of occupiers, with possibly a few skilled dairymaids, who may also be making butter or some other type of cheese, are concerned. The production of soft cheeses may provide openings for remunerative occupation for a few women of these classes.

The most numerous opportunities for the work of women in cheese-making then are those provided in some rather inaccessible districts where it is difficult to arrange for the economical collection of milk, either for the wholesale trade or for factory production of cheese, and those provided in certain districts in which small farms exist and in which there is a local demand for cheese, both hard and soft. But wherever the quantities of cheese produced are such that it is necessary to seek general commercial markets it is probable that efforts will be made to standardise the product by factory methods.

It should be remembered that the work of making large hard cheeses on farms still requires a great deal of arduous labour; and for this reason it is sometimes difficult to obtain wage-earning women for this work.

81. *Butter-making.*—The Committee do not consider that the general prospects for the employment of women in butter-making are such as to warrant any special treatment of the subject. It is generally realised that the economic conditions attending butter-making on farms in this country are not such as will lead to any substantial increase in the number of farmers who make butter, or the amount which may be made on farms. But as butter-making is to some extent practised on most farms for home consumption, and is an essential part of the product of the small farms in inaccessible districts, the subject cannot be dismissed without a reference.

On the small hill farms of Wales, and the small farms on poor pasture in England, where stock rearing is the most important phase of the farm business, butter is an essential part of the product of the farm. And where skimmed milk is required for calf-rearing, butter will continue to be made. Indeed, in many instances butter will be made rather than cheese, because of the production of skimmed milk and butter-milk. But the making of butter under these circumstances affects only a comparatively small number of women, and of these the great majority are relatives of the occupiers. The production of a reliable substitute for skimmed milk, or the spread of knowledge of methods of rearing calves on available milk substitutes might lead to some change from butter to cheese making; but at present it appears probable that butter-making will be continued.

The making of high grade butter for private consumption or sale, by a few skilled dairymaids, wives of bailiffs on home-farms, and a number of wives and relatives of farmers in certain districts will also continue; but there are no prospects of any material increase in the number of women occupied in the making of butter.

### (3) Small Holdings.

82. *Women's share in management.*—Part of the consideration of the relation of women to the success of small holdings naturally falls under the subjects of the position of women in the general industries of dairying, poultry keeping and market gardening, but special consideration of the general relations of women to the success of small holdings is required. In the first place, this success is largely dependent upon the practice of economy in comparatively small details. Thought and active attention must be given to obtaining the fullest possible use of every part of the equipment and product of the small farm. No land must be wasted, no live-stock must fail to produce at its highest capacity, and no bye-products which are capable of use must find their way to the scrap-heap. The supervision and practice of much of the necessary economy must be carried on by the women of the household if success is to be attained. The functions of women are closely connected with the care of the smaller livestock, and through this, with the use of the bye-products of the holdings. And when the final stage of production of any commodity is reached, the functions of women often entail the economical use of part of the product in the house, otherwise failure to make the best use of the product is incurred.

The unit of management of many small holdings is essentially that of the family. There may be recognised divisions of function, but when any important step is to be taken, a decision is rarely made on the sole responsibility of one person. And the fact that the women of the small holdings habitually take some part in the management means that consultation in the more important concerns is not merely a matter of form. Moreover, the success of the holding depends, not only on its internal organisation, but on such external organisation as will remove, as far as possible, all inherent disadvantages of the small business as compared with the larger unit. The influence of women on the development of external organisation of the holdings may be very important, for a suspicious or ill-informed woman may restrain a more progressive husband, while a well-informed and far-seeing woman may stimulate a backward husband. There is evidence, in particular, that the success of co-operative enterprises in connection with small holdings is much affected by the attitude of the women of the holdings.

83. *Women's share in the work.*—This applies to the management, but the assistance of women is also required in the work of the holding. Holdings of less than 50 acres cannot always employ sufficient labour all the year round to cope with work at busy seasons. In this case the extra supply required for casual work is not always available, and when it is to be obtained the price is frequently high. If, therefore, the female members of the household are capable of rendering efficient services in times of strain the holding may be independent of outside casual labour; or it may be profitable to use the labour of the family for operations which could not be conducted to advantage if it

were necessary to employ casual workers at high rates. Apart from seasonal changes in the amount of labour required, however, many small holdings need what may be termed odd units of labour. A holding may provide employment for one man, and need other regular labour without requiring that of another man. A hired boy or a son may or may not be obtainable; but if not the only economical way is to use the services of a woman or girl, either regularly in the lighter tasks of the holding, or partly on the holding and partly in the house.

Thus, as regards the spheres of both management and work, the Committee are convinced that, as in the past so in the future, the assistance of women is required for the fullest development of small holdings.

84. *General functions of women on small holdings.*—The forms of assistance required of women if small holdings are to be successful are:—

- (a) Assistance in internal management of the business.
- (b) Oversight of or assistance in the management of the external business.
- (c) Assistance in the lighter manual work of the holding.
- (d) Fitting the economy of the house with that of the holding.

The character of the first two items does not differ in essentials on the various types of holding, dairying, market-gardening, &c. The character of the manual work, however, will vary with the character of the holding. On the dairy holdings, women's manual work will be limited in most cases to milking and rearing calves, making cheese or butter, and attending poultry. On general holdings where there is arable land under ordinary crops, they may undertake the lighter jobs of the fields and the attendance on pigs and poultry. On market garden holdings their tasks will be largely those of picking, bunching and tying, or packing produce for market, though some of the lighter work of cultivation is frequently undertaken by women of the small market gardens. In all these cases the amount of work that will be done by women depends upon the number of female relatives living on the holding in relation to the size of the whole family and the character of the house which is maintained. Where there is only the wife of the small holder, with young children, little or no manual work may be expected. But where there are daughters of a working age, or a servant, much manual work may be expected of them, as has been the case in the past.

85. *Houscraft and conservation of perishable produce.*—The most essential part of the relations of the economy of the home to that of the holding is perhaps the conservation of certain perishable produce, which does not find immediate sale, for use in the house, and of making economical use of some bye-products which do not find a ready sale at remunerative prices. For instance, the whole or parts of gluts of fruit may be preserved by bottling or being made into jam. A capable cook will find many uses for skim milk or buttermilk; or would not allow the hens

discarded from the laying stocks to be sold off the holdings at prices below their meat value, when they could be used in the house.

There is evidence that the practice of some of the housecraft required on small holdings has not been as frequent as was desirable. In some parts of the country, for instance, women on small farms have asked for instruction in bacon curing, and the interest shown by village women in the methods of preserving fruit for home consumption in recent years is well-known.

*86. Prospects for women on small holdings.*—The number of opportunities provided for the occupation of women on small holdings depends upon the number of the holdings themselves. This follows from the above statements, wherein it is suggested that in the main the women who find opportunities will be the members of the occupiers' households. Few women are likely either to become themselves the occupiers of holdings, or to find paid employment.

The demand for small holdings has been very keen during this year, and although this may be due in part, as after the passing of the Small Holdings Act of 1908, to misconceptions on the facilities for obtaining holdings, there is no doubt that a very solid body of intending small holders, with the necessary experience and some capital, will be found amongst the applicants. The conditions necessary for the success of an extension of the system of small cultivation have been thoroughly canvassed by other bodies, and the Committee find it unnecessary to give any consideration to these general conditions.

From their particular reference, however, it is necessary to point out that the development of a system of small cultivation on land already fully used in other farm units will necessarily be a slow process; and that the absorption of women will be correspondingly slow.

It is probable that the development of a small class of women occupiers of small holdings is dependent upon the prospects of market gardening and poultry keeping, and may be considered with these subjects. Few women have made experiments in the management of small holdings of a general type, except when they become small holders as widows. Here and there a single woman has managed a small holding of a dairy type, but these examples are few, and at present do not provide sufficient experience to give any guidance for the future.

No hopes of the employment of a large number of ordinary hired women on small holdings can be entertained. Casual labour will probably be required on holdings of a market garden type, and possibly on some others. But the total demand for women employees cannot be great, unless the extension of the system of small cultivation leads to the growth of a class of farm servants which has been such an important item in the economy of the small farm system of the North Western Counties of England and

of parts of Wales. At present there is no ground on which any forecast of such a development can be made; but it may be said that these servants, who undertake complex duties in the farm-yard, house, and sometimes on the land, provide a most useful and economical form of labour on small farms, especially those devoted to dairying and stock-rearing.

#### (4) Market Gardening.

87. *Prospects of the industry.*—The statistics of the market gardening industry do not adequately represent its importance in the total production of the land of England and Wales, for many small areas of ordinary market garden crops are not enumerated in the Annual Agricultural Statistics. Nor has there been any special enquiry into the extent and condition of market gardening and fruit growing in recent years. This latter fact may be taken to indicate that the industry itself has been in a very healthy condition; and it is generally known that a gradual expansion was occurring previous to 1914. Under the circumstances it will be sufficient to quote the conclusions of the Departmental Committee on the Settlement and Employment of Soldiers on the Land with regard to this subject:—

“ We are fully alive to the fact that there is a limit to the number of small fruit and market garden holdings which can wisely be created immediately. Some authorities maintain that some market garden crops are already being over-produced, particularly the more easily grown vegetables, and, whether this is so or not, it would obviously be unwise to do anything which would create a glut and reduce prices to an unremunerative level. We are convinced, however, that gluts are usually the result of want of market organisation, and that, if distribution is properly organised, there is considerable opening for an increase in the home supply of many kinds of fruits and vegetables. The value of fresh fruit and vegetables imported into this country from abroad in 1913 was over £15,000,000, and, although about one-third of this represents tropical fruits, there is no reason why a substantial proportion of the remainder should not be replaced by an increased production at home.”\*

The production of some crops, as celery and rhubarb, has been reduced during the later part of the period of the war; but there is little doubt that the extent of these crops will again increase as control is removed. Also, some branches of the industry are steadily developing, as in the case of glasshouse culture. Altogether, there are indications of steady development in the industry.

The type of work normally done by women in market garden areas has been indicated in Chapter III. and no further discussion is required.

88. *War conditions and demand for women.*—Owing to the special conditions of the period of war, both as regards shortage of foodstuffs and the withdrawal of male labour for military purposes, a large increase took place in the number of

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\* Cd. 8182, 1916, p. 10.

women workers upon market gardens and allotments. The Report on Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture\* already quoted states that in every market garden area an increased amount of female labour has been noted, and there can be little doubt that the experience of the last few years has proved the capacity of women to perform successfully many gardening tasks that were regarded as being outside their sphere of action before the war.

Although it is difficult to form a reasoned judgment upon the degree of permanence that should be anticipated in this connection, evidence was given to the Committee that the war-time employment of women in glass and hot-house forms of culture had met with so much success that the demand for women workers for that class of labour is likely to become normal.

89. *Importance of women's labour.*—In dealing with the question whether the services of women were required in the development of market gardening to its fullest extent the Committee were of opinion that the reply depended upon the experience of the past as to the relative importance of men and women as wage-earning workers upon large holdings; and the relative importance of men and women as workers (paid or unpaid) upon small holdings and commercial allotments.

The demands made upon the services of women on large holdings in the past have been almost solely for casual labour. A few women in the districts in which the industry has reached the highest state of development find work all the year round, or, at any rate, are employed whenever the weather conditions enable them to present themselves for employment. A much larger number in these districts find work for six or eight months of the year. While a still larger number of women, especially in the fruit growing districts, find work for a few weeks in the course of the summer. But the circumstances of the industry are such that casual labour of some kind is essential for its success. There are many processes to which there can be no hope of adapting machinery, but for which it would be extremely wasteful to provide regular male labour.

There is much evidence to the effect that the supply of female labour in market garden districts is quite sufficient to meet the demand in normal times; and while the women who have other occupations—domestic or otherwise—can be drawn upon for the extra labour required their employment is of mutual advantage to the industry and the women.

The Table below gives certain figures supplied to the Committee by employers who were asked for information on the subject of the relative importance of men and women on large market garden holdings. It is difficult to make a definite estimate upon which reliance can be placed, but if the average proportion of the year worked by each woman is taken as two-thirds (which appears to be a fair figure), it is found that 43 women are em-

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\* Cmd. 24, par. 94.

ployed to each 100 men. By reducing the proportion of time worked by women to two-thirds these relative numbers of men and women are given in times of regular employment. But taking the figures in the Table, and ignoring the last two items (in one of which the number of men is unknown, and the other of which is of somewhat exceptional character), the totals are: Men, 798; women, 516; and the proportions are 64 women to each 100 men. As the majority of these returns were obtained from Middlesex, where exceptional numbers of women are sometimes employed, there is reason to believe that the proportion of women is rather too high for the whole of the market gardening districts of England and Wales.

RETURNS FROM MARKET GARDENERS SHOWING THE NUMBERS OF MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED.

County of Residence of Employer.	Acreage.	Women Employed (some seasonally).	Men Employed.
Middlesex	187	25	66
"	90	14	18
"	114	29	43
"	345	27	84
"	133	22	28
"	22	20	29
"	630	70	68
"	400	25	45
"	500	21	27
"	1,050	86	166
"	328	57	96
"	100	3 in winter. 25 in summer.	20
Bedfordshire	300	None in winter. 70 in summer.	32
Essex	371 and 26 under glass.	22	76
"	—	25 in winter to 60 or 70 in summer.	Not known.
Herts	33 under glass.	80	90

On the relative importance of men and women on small market garden holdings the Committee have no statistical information. It is practically certain, however, that the proportion of women to men on these holdings is higher than in the case of those which exceed 100 acres. This is true of holdings in general\* and there

\* Average of permanent and temporary labourers employed (including occupiers' families) per 100 acres in Great Britain, June 4th, 1908:—

Acreage of Farm.	Permanent Labour.		Temporary Labour.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
1 to 5 acres	8·0	5·4	2·6	.6
5 to 50 "	4·3	2·2	.8	.3
50 to 300 "	2·5	.8	.3	.1
Over 300 "	2·3	.3	.2	.1

is every reason to believe that it is particularly true of market gardens. In the case of allotments cultivated for commercial purposes it is known that in many instances a considerable part of the work is done by the wives of the occupiers, especially when the men have other occupations, such as employment on neighbouring farms.

Moreover, on many small market garden holdings no hired labour is employed, and any extra labour required at various seasons has to be supplied by members of the family of the occupier. And in many cases it would not be economically sound to run these holdings without the assistance of women.

*90. Demand for women.*—The evidence obtained by the Committee showed that the supply of women for work on market gardens was quite sufficient to meet the demand in normal times. During the period of the war there were complaints from a few districts that the number of women workers was insufficient, but on the whole the supply was equal to the demand, even during the last three years. The future demand depends upon the normal extension of the industry, and upon the creation of small holdings devoted to market garden purposes.

The Committee are of opinion that any increased demand due to the normal expansion of the industry will be fully met by a supply of labour from the same classes as that hitherto employed has been drawn. Many of the women who undertake market garden work are relatives of men employed on the neighbouring farms or on the market gardens; and as men are necessary to the extension of the industry the available supply of women will be increased with the number of men employed. Where this condition is less prominent, as in some of the suburban areas, there is reason to believe that an increased supply of casual women workers can still be obtained.

It is probable that a considerable proportion of the number of small holdings which may be established will be used for market gardening purposes, and that the wife and dependants of the male holder will take their part in the work of the land, thus increasing the number of women employed. The same opportunities are offered to women as to men under the Government scheme, but it is doubtful whether any substantial number of single women are in a position to undertake tenure of land by themselves.

*91. Wages.*—With regard to wage-earning women, the extent to which their services will be in demand would be affected by any increase of acreage under large market garden cultivation only so far as seasonal work is concerned. But in attempting to determine how great such demand is likely to be, the Committee considered that this class of labour, in common with other forms already referred to, would be largely influenced by alteration in scale of wages. The rise in minimum rates of wages may possibly result in a larger supply of male seasonal labour being available, in which case the demand on women might not be

increased proportionately to the extension of area, though this conjecture may be falsified by events.

92. *Local, not imported labour.*—But whichever of the two suggested alternative results may ultimately follow an increase of acreage under market garden cultivation, any extended demand for woman's labour must almost certainly be met by a supply from local resident sources.

The custom hitherto prevalent of their payment by the hour or piece instead of giving the women a weekly contract is one that finds its reason and origin in the dependence of the employer upon the fundamental factor of the weather. It is not possible to foresee the changes of weather conditions, and the engagement of seasonal workers (except in times of special emergency) by the week means running the risk of payment for hours and days when no return of service can be rendered—a risk that commercial men are unlikely to accept. Hence imported labour cannot be guaranteed a constant living wage, for alternative remunerative occupation would not be forthcoming. But local residents on the other hand can profitably fill up spare time in the performance of household or family duties. They are not entirely dependent on their earnings, which go to supplement an existing family budget.

As already mentioned, wage-earning women in market gardens have been drawn from two sources, members of the families of local farm workers and town dwellers. There appears to be no reason to anticipate any change in this respect to meet future demands. Market gardens are likely to continue to exist in close proximity to large towns or other centres affording convenient market for sale of produce. Areas possessing market garden cultivation in which such centres are not found are those where the soil is peculiarly adapted to the purpose, such as the Fen Districts and Cornwall.

The former class of holdings can continue to draw the necessary seasonal labour from the large town population in cases where the local supply proves to be insufficient, and the latter class, *i.e.*, those further removed from large cities have in the past supplemented their local supply of seasonal women workers from the smaller country towns in their own district, with the exception of areas devoted to extensive fruit growing. In these the large demand for seasonal workers during the harvest has been greater than any local supply could meet, and gangs of fruit pickers from London and other large cities have been in the habit of undertaking the work.

The Committee had no reason to believe that these various forms of supply would fail to meet future demand.

### (5). The Poultry Industry.

95. *Work of women in the past.*—The work of women in connection with poultry falls under three types: (*a*) poultry-keeping on small holdings and general farms; (*b*) poultry

keeping by cottagers; (c) management of or employment on poultry farms. On small holdings and on the smaller farms the care of poultry is usually one of the duties of the female members of the household. On large farms, especially where the farmer regards the poultry stock as an item worthy of his own attention, a boy was often detailed for this work, perhaps in connection with some other light duties; but often the wife of the farmer supervised the work of the boy or other person who was responsible for the details of the work. On some farms the products of the poultry yards have been regarded as the perquisites of the farmer's wife, in which case the female members of the household, the farmer's wife herself, or daughters, or the domestic servant, provided whatever care was given to the stock. The Committee have not been concerned with poultry kept by suburban householders. The poultry stock of small country cottagers has been not only an important item of the economy of the house and garden, but also in the supply of eggs for the general market. Its importance might have been greater but for some restrictions on poultry keeping imposed by employers or owners of property. Women have established specialised poultry farms, sometimes as a hobby, often as a business. As a rule, those which are run for a hobby only, except where the interest is strong enough to lead off the production of exhibition stock, have a short existence. Those run for business have varying results, according to the experience and capacity of the managers. Women have been employed on special poultry farms managed by men or women.

96. *Poultry production on farms.*—The value of poultry products from the agricultural holdings of England and Wales in 1908 was estimated at no less than £4,350,000, which is no mean sum; but the proportion of the total receipts of the farms obtained from poultry barely reached 3·5 per cent. The total value of the farm output of poultry and eggs was estimated at £5,000,000. At this time, the total number of poultry on agricultural holdings, with the number of eggs produced by flocks containing not less than 50 fowls or 10 ducks, geese, or turkeys, was as follows:—\*

#### POULTRY STOCKS ON FARMS, 1908.

	Total kept.	Eggs produced.
Fowls	... ... 32,356,000	1,108,483,000
Ducks	... ... 2,963,000	27,260,000
Geese	... ... 712,000	1,724,000
Turkeys	... ... 697,000	1,826,000

These figures, however, do not include large numbers of poultry kept or of eggs produced even in the country districts by persons other than occupiers of more than one acre of agricultural land.

97. *Imports of poultry produce.*—In 1908 the total declared values of imports of "poultry and game (alive or dead)" and

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\* For the statistics of Poultry keeping, see Report on the Agricultural Output, 1908 (1912), p. 15.

eggs imported into the United Kingdom were respectively £1,052,885 and £7,183,112. The quantities of poultry and game are not obtainable, but the number of eggs imported into the United Kingdom in 1908 was 2,185,298 thousands. From 1908 to 1913 the number of eggs imported was increasing, but the value of poultry and game imported was, on the whole, declining.\* Small quantities of game, the produce of the United Kingdom, were exported, and some of the imported eggs were re-exported. In 1914 the number and value of eggs imported and re-exported were as follows:—

#### IMPORTS OF EGGS, 1914.

The total value of—

	Number. Thousands.	Value. £
Imports ...	2,148,577	8,652,800
Re-exports ...	14,674	54,617
Net Imports ...	<hr/> 2,133,903	<hr/> 8,598,183

The total quantities and value of poultry and game imported and re-exported in 1914 were:—

#### IMPORTS OF POULTRY AND GAME, 1914.

<i>Live Poultry</i> —	<i>Quantity.</i>	<i>Value.</i> £
Imports (number) ...	541,161	23,698
Re-exports ...	44	14
Net Imports ...	<hr/> 541,117	<hr/> 23,684
<i>Dead Poultry</i> (cwts.) ...	223,599	775,263
Re-exports ...	20,323	93,596
Net Imports ...	<hr/> 203,276	<hr/> 681,667
<i>Game</i> —		
Imports ...	—	144,765
Re-exports ...	—	14,064
Net Imports ...	<hr/> —	<hr/> 130,701

The total quantities and values of United Kingdom poultry and game exported in 1914 were:—

#### EXPORTS OF POULTRY AND GAME, PRODUCE OF UNITED KINGDOM, 1914.

	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value.</i> £
Live Poultry (number) ...	24,864	18,671
Dead Poultry (cwts.) ...	1,886	8,586
Game ... ...	—	31,938
Total ... ...	<hr/> —	<hr/> 59,195

\* See Statistical Abstract, Cd. 8128, 1915, pp. 127 and 143.

The balance therefore stands as follows:—

NET IMPORTS OF POULTRY AND POULTRY PRODUCE, 1914.

<i>Net Imports.</i>	£	£
Eggs ... ... ...	8,598,183	
Live Poultry ... ... ...	23,684	
Dead Poultry ... ... ...	681,667	
	9,303,334	
<i>Exports, U.K. Produce.</i>		
Live Poultry ... ... ...	18,671	
Dead Poultry ... ... ...	8,586	
	27,257	
Balance of Imported Produce (values) ...	<b>£9,276,277</b>	

98. *Scope for development.*—Thus there is ample scope for the development of the poultry industry, especially if English eggs and poultry can be produced at such cost as will enable them to be sold at a price which, comparative quality being considered, makes them effective competitors with imported produce. The dissemination of knowledge of breeds, treatment and general methods of production, with some improvements in methods of marketing would no doubt improve the produce and reduce the cost. And if the actual reduction in cost were small, the reduction in cost and an increase in quality combined would result in a considerable margin between costs and price.

Stocks of European poultry are now depleted; stocks at home have been reduced owing to the scarcity of feeding stuffs, and therefore there is a very great need for an extension of poultry keeping. The industry must inevitably expand, and it is important that development should be constructive and permanent, and not merely directed to serve the needs of the moment.

It would therefore appear essential that home production should be increased and the already existing facilities offered by Government authority extended. With every such increase a corresponding demand for women's assistance may be expected.

99. *Prospect of employment.*—The duties in connection with rearing and feeding of poultry are especially suitable for women, for they include classes of work in which the services of women are likely to be preferred to those of men, owing to the woman's particular attention to detail and success in handling young stock. Farms of large size keeping many thousand hens would no doubt require male labour for the heavy carrying of food and water, and handling of produce for the market, etc., but the assistance of women may be regarded as economic and necessary even in these cases. Upon the general mixed farms and small holdings and in connection with cottage poultry keeping, the care of the poultry yard must largely, if not entirely, be in the hands of women. With the rise of wages the farmer is likely, as already mentioned, to concentrate the attention of his male

labourers upon the more important field operations, and endeavour to remove from them the lighter duties that can efficiently be performed by women. In most cases the women would be members of his own family or household, as the work would not occupy a woman's whole time; but where women members of the farmer's household are employed with poultry they will, in many cases at least, be expected to undertake other duties when the work with poultry is not sufficient to employ the whole of the time. Also, a certain demand for the services of wage-earning women as managers and assistants on poultry farms may be anticipated.

Further, it appears probable that the provision of large gardens with country cottages, and the establishment of considerable numbers of "cottage holdings" would be the preliminary means of obtaining a large increase in the poultry stock of the country, and in bringing in the services of women in poultry production.

## CHAPTER VI.

### WOMEN IN RELATION TO INDUSTRIES CONNECTED WITH AGRICULTURE.

#### (1) Afforestation.

100. *Suitable work.*—In considering what economic part can women take in afforestation the Committee were of opinion that though the assistance of women was not essential for the development of woodlands, yet evidence laid before them pointed to the conclusion that authorities concerned are relying partly upon local woman labour for nursery, and in some instances planting work in connection with schemes of afforestation in the immediate future. Though women have not been much used in this connection in the past, the final report of the Forestry Sub-Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction\* states the opinion that work in nurseries and woodlands in connection with small holdings provide suitable employment for women.

101. *Nursery work.*—This appears to be specially suitable for local part-time and seasonal women-workers, and there is reason to believe that though in some districts opinion has in the past been adverse to the idea of the employment of women in this class of work, experience gained during the war has largely broken down the prejudice. Women have been successfully employed, both in planting in the lighter soils and in nursery

\* Cd. 8881, 1918, page 28. "Forestry opens a new vista for the small holdings policy. It makes the creation of small holdings not only possible but necessary in districts where the cost would otherwise be prohibitive. The small holdings will be grouped together on the best land within or near the forests so as to economise labour in the working of the holdings to afford opportunities for co-operation in buying and selling and to provide an ample supply of juvenile and female labour for nursery work." In further discussion of the relations between forestry and small holdings, the Committee stated that "forestry provides suitable employment for women and children." But see the whole section on Small Holdings in this Report.

work, during the past three years and in certain districts appear to regard the employment favourably.

102. *Extent of demand for women.*—As regards the extent to which women are likely to be wanted in afforestation and upon what this extent depends, the Committee considered that the numbers required would be influenced by two factors, viz.:—

- (a) The acreage dealt with under official re-afforestation and afforestation schemes.
- (b) The relative value of women labour as compared with that of men.

103. In considering the probable acreage to be replanted in the near future the Committee were faced with the difficulty of being unable to foretell the policy of the Government in this matter. Should the recommendation of the Forestry Sub-Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction be carried out and 150,000 acres be afforested by direct State action, as well as encouragement and financial assistance given to local authorities and private owners, the demand for women labour for nursery work and to some degree for planting would be increased from that of pre-war time. But that demand is likely to be for local women only, not for imported wage-earners, with the possible exception of a few trained forewomen.

104. *Value of woman labour.*—As regards the relative value of men's and women's labour in forestry, the Committee were of opinion that evidence appeared to show that for nursery work women were of greater value than men at certain seasons of the year, viz., when lining out and handling of young plants is necessary. But in connection with general planting, except in certain light soils, and in the other parts of afforestation work, men are by physique more adapted for the labour and must therefore be less expensive than women to the employer.

## (2) Flax Production.

105. *General prospects.*—In considering the production of flax and whether the help of women is necessary for its development, the Committee bore in mind the history of the decline of the industry during the later years of the 19th century and the decision of the Development Commission to grant financial aid to its resuscitation.

During the War, the cessation of imported flax and the national necessity for the same stimulated its production under Government authority.

It was understood that the Government hopes to induce private enterprise to undertake the industry in time to come. Whether the commercial future of flax growing in Great Britain is destined to succeed is a question upon which the Committee did not feel competent to express an opinion. But assuming that the flax production develops into a permanent industry, the Committee were of opinion that evidence laid before them justified the view that the work of women will be necessary. Flax production

requires a large amount of seasonal labour during certain periods of the year, especially in the harvesting of the same, and such labour can be supplied, under existing rural conditions, only by local women.

106. *Women and Irish flax.*—In Ireland the flax crop is almost entirely grown on small farms varying from 20 to 100 acres in size. The field acreage area devoted to flax by each farmer would not exceed two to two-and-a-half acres. The field operations in which the women take part, pulling, tying and stooking, are principally carried out during August and September, the period covering from four to six weeks. During this time the women do not work continuously. The women employed on field operations are chiefly married women living in the locality. Payment is made both on piece and time rates. Flax growing does not appear to have had any appreciable effect in tending to keep young women in rural areas instead of migrating to the towns. In addition to the work in growing flax, women are employed in the scutch mills. Here some married women are employed, but the great majority of female mill-workers are single. Employment in the mills usually extends from the end of September to the following April or May, and in some cases until the end of June. The women have steady employment during the period the mills are working.

Flax growing was still carried on in a few districts in England before serious efforts were made to develop the industry, but few women appear to have been employed. During the last two or three years, however, they were employed on such field operations as, weeding, pulling, stooking and thatching; but the chief field operations are those connected with the harvesting. They have also been employed in the operations connected with the manufacture of fibre, such as deseeding, spreading the wet flax after retting, breaking and scutching.

107. *Local women required.*—Owing to the prevailing (war) conditions, the local and imported women have been employed in both the field and the factory operations. It appears, however, that under normal conditions the growers will rely chiefly upon local supplies of women labour for the casual work of the summer months. It is possible that gangs of itinerant flax pullers from the larger towns may be organised; but this will only be the case if the crop is grown to such an extent that the supply of village women in any locality is not equal to the demand. Most people of experience consider that the production of flax will develop under the most favourable conditions if grown by individual farmers on such acreage as would allow each to obtain the necessary harvest labour in his own immediate village or neighbourhood.

The number of women required for factory work compared with the number required for casual field work is comparatively small. But work may be provided for nearly the whole of the year,

except the harvest months, as the industry develops. The factory operations include deseeding, drying after retting, breaking and scutching. Evidence was given to the Committee that in one factory the number of women employed during recent years had exceeded that of men. There is also evidence that the operations are suitable for women, and that they show interest in and desire for the work.

108. *Demand for women's labour.*—On the question as to what extent will women's labour be necessary and upon what does that extent depend, the Committee considered that the numbers required would depend upon the annual acreage laid down under flax. Information supplied to the Committee showed that in 1918 the amount of land devoted to flax growing under Government auspices was approximately 15,000 acres. The Preliminary Agricultural Returns for 1919 show that the total area under flax in England and Wales was 18,440 acres. Both as regards harvesting and deseeding the flax, the employers rely largely upon women labour, some authorities estimating that 4/5ths of the total hands employed would be women.

### (3) Other Industries Connected with Agriculture.

109. *Beet sugar.*—It has been demonstrated that the sugar beet can be grown economically in some of the eastern and western counties of England.\* But so far, experience shows that the operations on the crop are similar to those on ordinary root crops; and if women were employed in the production of beet the work would be mainly of a casual character, in the hoeing and lifting seasons.

The weeding of sugar beet entails greater care than that of other root crops; even if beets therefore merely replaced other roots in the cropping system of the farms the amount of manual labour required would be increased. Should the beets be grown in addition to the ordinary root crops the increase in the amount of manual labour required would be considerable.

Those farmers who grew sugar beet in the western counties in 1912 "were impressed . . . by the difficulty and cost of lifting, the shortage of labour having been experienced for a considerable time, while the lifting machine had either come too late or had worked unsuccessfully."† In the extension of the industry a successful and economical lifting machine would probably produce a situation in which the special labour of women was required only for hoeing, singling and weeding the crop.

As regards the employment of women in the manufacture of sugar the Committee have no information, except that the factory which was organised in 1914 would, even, if its business had developed, have provided very little employment. It was intended in this factory to employ women only on minor operations.

On the whole, it appears that the demand for women in the beet sugar industry will be mainly confined to field work in the summer and autumn.

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\* See Articles in *Journal of Board of Agriculture*, February and June, 1915.

† *Journal*, Vol. XXIII., p. 212.

110. *Jam making.*—The manufacture of jam under the ordinary factory system affects the employment of women in agriculture chiefly through its effect on fruit-growing. It appears, however, that women are employed in all factories in which jam is made. The number of women employed depends, of course, on the size of the business. But in all cases, employment is more or less casual, although a few women are employed during the whole of the year. In the case of large factories women are employed mainly in filling, tying, labelling, and packing the pots of jam. Factories in urban areas chiefly employ the ordinary factory type of women workers. Conditions of labour are regulated by a Trade Board under the Trades Boards Act.

In some instances the women employed in large jam factories at other seasons of the year provide a supply of labour for market gardens and fruit plantations during the early months of the summer.

There are, however, a number of small jam factories in rural or semi-rural areas in which women are employed during the whole of the year. And during the War co-operative enterprises in jam-making have been carried on in a number of villages. The small private businesses appear to be fairly well established and to have little or no fear as to their future position. Some of the co-operative village enterprises have also achieved temporary success; but varying opinions are held as to their future prospects. The buildings and appliances hitherto used have been of a makeshift character and cannot be regarded as permanent.

For the most part, work has been carried on only during the fruit season of the later months of summer. Some voluntary and unpaid labour has been given in the organisation of the centres and also occasionally in the collection of materials, and in clerical work connected with manufacture and sale. In some cases, indeed, all labour was voluntary, and some of the profits realised have been given to charitable organisations. In other cases, all labour in the actual manufacture and packing of produce was paid for.

Where the organisation was most complete, and the nearest approach to commercial conditions was reached, a high degree of success was attained. But everywhere the enterprises were economically justified by the conditions which prevailed. Also, local interest in the preservation of food-stuffs—particularly fruit—has been stimulated.

The future prospects of the co-operative enterprises as commercial organisations appear to depend largely on their organisation on a definite basis and on the provision of buildings and appliances necessary for the work. Experience seems to show that in order to establish rural industries in jam-making and fruit preserving on an economic basis, all forms of preserving and pickle-making must be combined so as to provide work for staff and appliances during the months when fresh fruit locally produced cannot be obtained. The experience of small private firms in several localities indicates that jam-making and preserving on a small scale may be financially successful when local

produce is available and the internal organisation of the business is such as leads to the best utilisation of staff and plant. When the quality of the product is reliable a local demand can usually be found, and transport charges, both in collection of materials and distribution of produce, can be saved.

There is no reason for believing that the large firms of jam manufacturers will lose their hold on the manufacture and trade. Nor, on the other hand, is there any room for doubt that small enterprises established in areas in which fruit is produced and in which a local demand for jam can be found, can be financially successful. But much depends upon the organisation of the collection of materials, the operations of manufacture, and the distribution.

Women are employed by all classes of jam manufacturers; but village women are employed, practically speaking, only by the small firms and by the co-operative enterprises. And in the case of the small firms, as in that of the large firms, conditions of employment are not otherwise than satisfactory. Conditions prevailing during the war have given a considerable impetus to the establishment of rural co-operative jam factories; and any extension of the jam-making industry in rural areas might afford employment to women both in the factory and indirectly through the increased production of fruit.

This applies only to the manufacture of jam for sale, but the preservation of fruit for use by cottages and small-holders might be co-operatively carried on in the village depots. This could best be organised by some such association as the Women's Institute. Such organisation would stimulate the interest of women in the mutual economy of the house and garden or smallholding; and under suitable conditions valuable work could be done.

*111. Canned fruit.*—Prior to 1914 the supplies of canned fruit were almost entirely obtained from overseas; but one or two canning factories were in existence in England. And so far as the experience of these factories goes, it appears that it is possible to develop a canning industry in this country. During the war encouragement in experimental work has been given by the Government. There are now some indications that commercial success may be attained, and that the industry may become established in this country.

The successful canning of fruit involves the situation of factories in the immediate neighbourhood of the fruit plantations, and the industry must therefore be a rural one. It is also essential that tins be made in or very near the factory in which canning is done, because sheet tin is much more easily transported than the finished cans. The making of cans provides work for some employees in the seasons in which canning cannot be carried on.

In the factories established before the war, work was continuous during the whole of the year. Most of the processes provide suitable work for women, who were employed in cleaning fruit, placing fruit in tins, capping tins, lacquering, labelling

and packing tins, "and in making tins by machinery. The care of machines and ovens, and lifting of heavy cases, is undertaken by men. But it appears that in an extension of the industry women would supply the bulk of the labour both in picking fruit and for indoor operations. In the established factories local resident women, both married and single, but chiefly young women have been employed. Girls from 16 to 24 years of age are readily employed, and appear to take to the work and to remain in the fruit growing districts. Conditions of labour are regulated under the Factory Acts, and wages are determined by the Trade Board.

On the whole it appears that some development of fruit canning may be expected, and that the services of women will be required both in the outdoor work and picking fruit and in the factory operations.

*112. Fruit pulping.*—The pulping of fruit for its preservation until it can be made into jam had not been carried on in this country to any extent previous to the war, but a number of pulping stations were established in 1917 and 1918. The industry is a seasonal one, carried on during the ripening seasons of the fruit which has "jellying" properties, such as damsons and apples. It is not necessarily a rural industry, for bruised fruit can be pulped; and indeed it is often easier to transport the fruit than the pulp. The pulp is often prepared in the neighbourhood of the factory in which it is to be made into jam.

Some of the smaller manufacturers of jam do not use pulp, priding themselves on the production of "pure" jam, made with fresh fruit and sugar. The preparation and storage of fruit pulp, however, might enable village co-operative jam depots to save gluts of fruit, and also to continue their operations during the slacker months of the year.

Women have been employed at the special emergency pulping stations during the war period and some of the village co-operative societies regard the preparation of the pulp as women's work.

While it is practically certain that fruit pulping will not develop as a separate industry in England and Wales, it may remain and develop to some extent as a seasonal operation in rural districts in which fruit is grown, in connection with co-operative fruit and vegetable societies or co-operative jam factories. But development is limited by the comparative rarity of gluts of fruit. Developments would lead to a demand for women's labour; but so far as can be ascertained, such demand is likely to be small.

*113. Fruit bottling.*—The bottling of fruit may be carried on in connection with co-operative jam factories, or by the groups of cottagers and smallholders' wives who wish to preserve fruit by this method for home consumption, or by similar women in their separate homes. Demonstrations in the methods of bottling fruit have stimulated interest in this method of preserving fruit, during the war and considerable advantages may accrue in the

economical use of the fruit crop. But the quantities bottled will depend largely upon the supply of fruit in different seasons; and so far as the Committee have any information the industry is not likely to develop in such a way as to provide employment for any very large number of women.

**114. Pea picking and packing.**—The preparation of dry peas for culinary purposes is a small industry carried on mainly in Lincolnshire and some other parts of the Fen District. Women are employed by all the firms in the business, and supply the bulk of the labour. Some firms rely solely upon female workers. The operations include picking and sorting peas by hand, wrapping tabloids by machinery, and packing peas by hand. The work is seasonal, usually lasting from August to March. The factories are mostly situated in towns, and the urban type of factory worker is usually employed. The employees of the packing firms sometimes work on the farms in the neighbourhood during the summer.

Although some firms engaged in the business state that they could employ more women than were obtainable in the winter of 1918-19, it does not appear that any general expansion of the business may be expected.

**115. Vegetable drying.**—Vegetable drying stations have been established during the war, especially in Kent; but there are now no prospects of the establishment of the industry on a permanent basis. When vegetables of various kinds can be obtained during the whole of the year there is no advantage to be obtained from the expense of the processes of drying. Moreover, doubt has been thrown on the antiscorbutic value of dried vegetables. The old-established firms making prepared soups are likely to develop and continue because the public are accustomed to and appreciate the use of their products, and these will continue to use some dried, powdered, and shredded vegetables. The Committee do not consider, however, that there will be any permanent commercial development of the industry.

**116. Potato flour and farina manufacture.**—During the war a scheme for the manufacture of potato flour was instituted as an emergency measure. It was intended to set up a number of mills in country areas, and the plant was prepared and ready for use shortly before the cessation of hostilities. It is doubtful whether the industry will now develop as there will be little or no demand for the flour when fresh potatoes can be obtained all through the year.

There are three mills for the production of farina now in existence in England, and it is possible that one or two others may be established. In the opinion of the authorities, there is a commercial future for the product as it is useful for commercial purposes where stiffening materials are required. Women are employed in the factories, but these are not situated in rural areas. As there is no probability of any considerable extension of the industry, and the present factories are situated in urban areas, the production of the farina will not affect the employment of rural women, except very slightly in so far as it

creates a demand for potatoes, in the growing of which they are engaged.

**117. Bacon curing.**—Factories devoted to bacon curing and the preparation of pig products are situated in several small country towns. Most of the firms employ women, but the proportion of women to men at the time of enquiry was somewhat abnormal, owing to the prevailing conditions created by the war. The women are mostly residents in the small towns, except in one district in Wiltshire where the rural population is drawn upon. The amount of work provided for women is greatest where sausages and pork pies are made, and, during the war, where some products were canned. The operations carried on by women include the washing of carcases, preparation of sausage skins, making sausages (by machinery), weighing and packing sausages, and making and packing pork pies. Where canned goods are prepared women also prepare (cut up) vegetables and meat, and make, fill and pack the tins. Wages for some operations, as tinning, are determined by the Trade Board under the Trade Boards Act. The work in bacon factories is not hard or unpleasant, with the exception of washing of carcases and preparing sausage skins. The washing is undertaken only by the roughest type of women. Skin preparing is light work and only unpleasant owing to the material dealt with. Sausage and pie making is easy work. The women have nothing to do with slaughtering or actual curing of bacon.

But the chief effect of the bacon-curing industry on the employment of women in the future is probably to be found in its influence on the rearing and fattening of pigs. In one district of Wiltshire a factory has drawn large supplies of pigs from a group of small holdings in the neighbourhood, and the small-holders have benefited by the provision of a ready market for their produce. It is stated that both women and girls have been encouraged to remain in the country through the development of the holdings on which these pigs were produced. Two factories have also drawn large supplies of pigs from some Cornish villages, and would do the same in other districts if villagers would organise the supply and collection of small numbers of pigs.

A factory in the Eastern Counties, under a Co-operative Society, draws pigs from the members of the society, numbering about 600. Some authorities on bacon-curing also consider that factories should be situated in country districts, in touch with small-holdings and allotments.

**118. Milk drying.**—The existing factories in which dried milk only is prepared are mainly situated in urban areas. They employ women in greater numbers than men, and these women are drawn from the towns and also from the neighbouring villages. The work consists mainly of filling bottles (by hand or machine), and sealing, labelling, cleaning and packing bottles. The normal work of women is not hard or unpleasant, though some of the heavier jobs have been done by them during the last two years,

and the surroundings are clean and comfortable. Some authorities on the milk industry are of opinion that the organisation of the collection of whole milk may lead to the establishment of milk-drying plants in rural districts. It is in fact carried on in recently established milk factories as a means of dealing with the surplus milk. But it appears to the Committee that the organisation of a sufficient supply of fresh milk would limit the production of dried milk to the amount required for the manufacture of patent goods and specialities, for which the demand would appear to be limited. In any case, the industry is not likely to develop to such an extent as to affect in any appreciable degree the general employment of women in rural areas.

**119. General considerations.**—However small numerically the importance of these individual industries may appear to be, they have an appreciable influence on the work and life of women in rural and semi-rural areas. This influence is exerted in two spheres. In the first place the industries create a demand for farm produce and add to the amount of farm employment and to the profitability of the farming industry. In the second place, they provide opportunities for alternative work and experience for women living in rural areas, and thus add to the variety of life. This is an advantage, for individual desires and tastes have to be met in the matter of vocation, and it is more desirable that country-bred women who do not wish to be occupied directly in the agricultural industry should work in local factories, rather than they should migrate to large distant urban centres. While they are resident in rural or semi-rural areas, in touch with the production of those areas, they do not forget their country experiences, and if in the course of time they marry farm workers and settle in the localities they are better suited to a rural environment than are those who migrate to large centres at a comparatively early age.

#### (4) Rural Industries.

**120. Types of rural industries.**—Besides the above industries, which are more or less connected with agricultural production, there are many others in rural areas which have little or no direct connection with agriculture.\* The attention of the Committee was drawn to these industries chiefly in connection with the facts (1) that some of them help to retain a number of women in rural areas who may be sometimes available for seasonal work on farms, (2) that others provide part-time employment for female relatives of farm workers and small holders (who are and would remain in residence in rural areas), thus improving their economic position. Basket-making is included with this group of industries because, although it is connected with osier-growing, which is a part of agricultural practice, the actual making of baskets has become quite a distinct industry, and also because in some recent developments it may be

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\* For a brief study of these industries see Report on Wages and Conditions of Labour in Agriculture, Cd. 24, 1919, pp. 21-25.

identified with the second class of industry indicated above. The enquiries of the Committee have, however, been limited in the main to certain old established industries.

121. *Craft innovations.*—Some aspects of the attempts to develop or revive the practice of certain crafts in villages have, however, been brought before the Committee. With regard to these innovations, it may be said that experience gained during the period of the war does not warrant any optimistic forecasts as to their general possibilities. During the war the demand for the products of these attempts to revive or establish industries has been due to extraordinary trade shortages, and a willingness on the part of traders to take any substitutes for ordinary trade stock which were available. The revival of production and trade in a normal form will expose these innovations to the competition of a supply produced and marketed under a strong system of organisation, while often the promoters and organisers of the innovations, as also the makers of goods, have little or no knowledge of business organisation, and little realisation of its importance. But in a few cases where there is a local use or demand for the articles made, the innovations will be useful.

122. *Industries providing seasonal workers.*—The term “rural industry” is a very vague one, and no definition can be found in the literature on the subject. It is generally applied to some form of small scale industry in the making of wearing apparel, or to small scale wood-working, and frequently to the practice of some craft in textiles, wood, leather, or metal. As there is little experience of the relation of the practice of these crafts to the work and life of the farm cottage, the Committee are unable to indicate any effect their development would have on either the demand for or the supply of female labour for farm work. But some of the relations of the old-established industries to the supply of labour are known.

The Report on Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture, prepared under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture, states that under the conditions prevailing in 1918 all these industries might be regarded as competitors with farming for female labour.\* But much depends upon the rates of wages offered by the competing industries. The earnings of hat-makers in Hertfordshire have been very low, and in 1918 it was reported that “many women have given up this work in favour of farm work,”† although there was plenty of hat-making for those who wished to have it. Amongst the “swans-down trimmers” of Cambridgeshire there is some alternation of employment between this industry and agriculture. In the case of the glove-making industry, again, there is some alternation between glove-making and farm work, at least in Oxfordshire. In one of the largest villages in which the industry is carried on in that county the firm concerned dispenses with part of its female labour during the busiest potato season. And one of the best “sewing schools” in the glove trade of the

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\* Cd. 24, p. 23.      † Cd. 25, p. 116.

county is situated in a village in which there are many small holders who are said to be doing well. But in Somersetshire the farmers have regarded glove-making as a competitor for labour.

These industries may be regarded as examples of those which have been long established in country districts. But in considering their relations to agriculture it must be remembered that they do not procure their materials nor expect to sell their products in the localities in which they exist. The reasons for the establishment of such industries in certain areas have little or no connection with present local conditions, except the cheapness of female labour, although this may not have been the case when the industry was first started. Although labour is cheap, there is always a tendency to use machinery whenever this is possible. And the female machine worker is in a somewhat different position to the hand worker, for work must be carried on at certain specified periods.

With all these industries there is great difficulty in determining whether the demands of any one can be made to fit in with the claims of agriculture as two seasonal occupations giving an adequate amount of employment. This depends partly on the class of goods produced, and partly on the commercial methods and resources of the firms engaged. The gloving industry, for instance, has provided very irregular employment. It is often the policy for a firm to keep an excessive number of outworkers on their books, giving out small quantities of work at slack times, or perhaps none at all on occasions, in order to have a large supply of labour available for a sudden demand. On the other hand, some of the best firms, with adequate financial resources and good trade connections, attempt to regularise employment.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to provide any indications of the future prospects of these rural industries. At present, they do occasionally provide a supply of labour for farm work, but on occasions the farmers regard these as competitors for labour.

Seasonal alternations of employment between such industries also depends upon the type of agriculture prevalent in the localities in which they are carried on. Where seasonal female labour is required in farming and another industry, mutual developments in the employment of labour may be of advantage to the two industries and to the workers themselves. But as there is a tendency to use machinery and to specialise labour in some degree, in every industry or under every firm which does not depend for its success on the very cheapest, or perhaps sweated labour, there is little hope of any development of a seasonal class of labour in this direction, except under undesirable conditions.

*123. Industries providing home employment.*—These industries may be some of those mentioned above, but while gloving under modern conditions, for instance, is carried on chiefly by machine operators in small workrooms in villages where employment is continuous at such times as there is work to be done, it may also

be given out to hand-workers at home. Here it may be picked up or dropped as the requirements of other work demand. And without depending upon such work for a livelihood women may reap advantage from its practice. It must not be thought, however, that undertaking such work does not involve some responsibility as to time of completion, for when the work is given out by a commercial firm the demand for work at one time may be very urgent, while at others there may be little or no demand. Under circumstances in which the workers were the promoters of the industry this would not be the case; but while commercial firms both supply the raw material and collect and sell the produce the workers who wish to retain the work are more or less compelled to study the convenience of the promoters of the industry. However, the employment provided by these hand industries has been of advantage to the female relatives of farm workers, and sometimes to those of small holders, in spite of the fact that it has often been badly paid. In the gloving industry of Oxfordshire, for instance, the factories are popular because they give employment to girls who would not undertake home work; but there are many women with home ties who like taking the work home. Sometimes they devote the best part of four days to gloving and the other two to housework, in other cases the time given to gloving is very much less. And as there appears to be a real and increasing demand for hand-sewn gloves, and in view of the fact that the actual cost paid for seaming up is a small proportion of the total cost of the product, there appears to be no reason why the glove-maker should not receive good wages for good work.

On the whole, however, these industries seem to be gradually disappearing.\* The hand knitted glove industry of the Ringwood district of Hampshire, which at one time provided a good deal of home employment for the female relatives of small holders, seems to be suffering from changes of fashion and the competition of the machine made article. And it appears to be a general condition that where these hand industries are more or less connected with a factory system, as they often are, the workers are poorly paid and are offered only the work with which the factories cannot cope.

**124. Control of part-time industries.**—The successful development of industries of this type in connection with seasonal work in agriculture, or part-time work in the homes of agriculturalists, appears to depend upon the workers themselves being the promoters and controllers of the industries, having an organisation for securing raw material and selling products; or upon the control being exercised by such firms as are financially strong enough to supply raw materials for work when other employment is scarce, and to store the product against the demand of the market.

Under any other circumstances there is no consideration of the respective demands of the two occupations on the workers. At present many of the small firms which organise these trades are in

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\* See Cd. 24, p. 24.

such a position that their demands for labour are entirely determined by the immediate condition of the market as regards raw material and demand for goods: and they are not in a position to arrange work to meet the seasonal demands of agricultural employment.

Yet amongst the seasonal field-workers of some districts, and the female relatives of cottagers and small holders in others, there is a potential supply of labour that might be attracted to some part-time work, with advantage to the promoters of a suitable industry and the workers themselves.

125. *Application of power to village industries.*—The Committee have not devoted any considerable amount of attention to this subject, but they are informed that in certain village work-rooms in which gloves are made the machines are prepared for either manual (treadle) or mechanical power; and that the workers have shown great interest in the possibility of applying electrical power to their machines. But whatever advance may be made in this connection only those workers who attend a workroom would be affected. The home-worker would not be able to obtain any benefit unless the power could be used in the house, and possibly for other purposes such as lighting, besides the propulsion of machinery.

126. *Osier growing and basket making.*—Osier growing as such has provided very little labour for women in the past, and this mainly in the form of hoeing or weeding. In connection with the production of rods, the chief part of the employment of women is in the peeling. Where the rods are sold green; or in the dry state with the bark still on as for making agricultural baskets, there is little work for women in the production of osiers. As the chief part of the work done by women is peeling it is necessarily seasonal. The peeling of buff rods is usually carried on in the winter months, from the time when the cutting begins onwards. But where rods are peeled after having dried it may be carried on at other seasons. In connection with some beds only part of the day is worked when peeling buff rods, because of the exigencies of boiling. The peeling of white rods is carried on mainly from May to July, but it may begin somewhat earlier. Sometimes the period in which the peeling of white rods is carried on in connection with any particular bed may be quite short. This is the case where only one variety of *salix* is grown, but the period is extended when several varieties which arrive at peeling condition in succession are grown. Also women are sometimes employed sorting rods, and in other capacities.

Thus the work is distinctly seasonal although where both buff and white rods are prepared, several months' work may be obtained by the more expert peelers.

The work on osier growing is also more or less localised in certain of the Midland, South Midland, and South Western Counties, and is certainly localised in river valleys.

The making of willow baskets has been, practically speaking, entirely the work of men; but in some towns, as in Birmingham, women have been employed on the lighter work. The industry

has also for the most part been carried on in towns. This is due to the necessity of making baskets where the demand arises, because it is easier and less expensive to transport rods than baskets. In addition, restrictions on the training of apprentices have been rigidly enforced by the trade unions concerned in the industry; but some change in this respect has been shown recently.

Although it is known that women can work with comparatively thin rods on the lighter types of basket, there is some doubt whether any except selected women could work successfully with the strong rods used for agricultural baskets. But as rods could be grown for a local demand in areas in which none are grown at present, and as they can also be transported into districts in which agricultural baskets are required, some experiments might be made in the introduction of basket making to meet a local demand in districts in which seasonal labour is employed in market gardening, or where small holders' relatives are partly employed in this work. For in these districts the baskets are used. Some difficulty may be met, however, in the fact that baskets are usually the property of commission agents or salesmen, especially when baskets are returnable, and are not the property of the small holder. And on the whole there are great advantages in this system, for the position of the salesman insures him to a large extent against the losses of baskets which would be incurred if they were owned by the growers. At the same time, baskets that never leave the premises are needed for the home and the holding, and as these are usually of a lighter character than the marketing baskets they could probably be made by women. The Women's Institutes have already had a demand for instruction in basket making from one or two areas and have not been in a position to supply either instructors or rods.

There is, however, another type of basket making which women have carried on with some success, viz., chip-basket making. These baskets are used for marketing strawberries and are non-returnable. The experiments made in the production of these baskets where they are needed for the marketing of soft fruits for table have been quite successful. As in the case of willow baskets, the raw material is more easily transported than the finished article, and wherever these baskets are required the female relatives of market gardeners and seasonal workers in the industry might be further encouraged to supply the demand.

## CHAPTER VII.

### STATE ACTION AND THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

**127. General considerations.**—The consideration of the second part of the terms of reference to the sub-committee, *viz.*, "to

recommend what steps should be taken to give practical effect to such conclusions as may be drawn," as to the economic part women can play in agriculture, may be facilitated by a brief statement of the scope of such action in relation to the various classes of women workers. During the period of the war many unprecedented actions were taken by the State to meet emergency conditions. These actions were necessary in the circumstances under which they were taken, and on the whole they were entirely justified by the results. One effect of these actions, however, has been to create an opinion that the State could take similar action under quite dissimilar conditions. For instance, the fact that the majority of the women of the land army received some specific training in institutions (often temporary) provided by the State has created an impression that similar training could be provided for all or nearly all women workers on farms. This may be an extreme instance, but it illustrates the attitude of mind of enthusiastic advocates of the employment of women in agriculture towards possible methods of realising their aims. Moreover, it illustrates the growth of the tendency to limit the responsibility of the individual in regard to the welfare of his own business or the general economic welfare of the community and to extend the responsibility and the sphere of action of the State. In many instances it is eminently desirable that State action should be extended, but immediate economic results of State actions can be purchased too dearly (in normal times) if individual responsibility is sapped. The provision of facilities for general education and of some facilities for technical education is now fully recognised as a function of the State, and the State has fully accepted the responsibility for these provisions, but so long as industry is privately organised the State cannot accept the responsibility for the manual training of every workman. Each employer of adolescent workers must be held responsible in some measure for the training of these workers in the vocation they follow in his employment, either personally or by the other employees with whom they work. Again, the provision of facilities for obtaining employment on one hand or labour on the other is now fully recognised as a function of the State, and the responsibility for the provision of some such facilities has been accepted, but upon the prospective employer or employee rests the responsibility of registering requirements. Under abnormal circumstances the State has not only registered requirements and given mutual information, but has stimulated and organised active demand for labour where previously only a passive need was felt, and stimulated a willingness to work where no demand for work existed; it has also organised supply, even to the extent of providing trained gang leaders or forewomen to take the labour on to the farms and supervise the tasks performed. To what extent such actions as have been taken during the war as regards the supply of labour and the training of workers would be justified under normal economic conditions is a matter for grave consideration. The Committee prefer to consider such questions in relation to specific classes of labour, but general principles should be observed.

*128. Voluntary Associations.*—Social action is not limited to the activities of the State, either in national or local government and administration, for the existence of voluntary associations has always been manifest in the rural areas of England and Wales. It is true that so far as formal association is concerned the voluntary associations have been more prominent in the spheres occupied by men than in those occupied by women. Forms of voluntary associations of women have existed, however, in English villages, and it is remarkable that the recent development of one association—the Women's Institute—should have been so rapid, and that persons who have been connected with the employment of women in agriculture during the war should have turned their attention, as they have, to the advantages of other forms of association. Suggestions have been made to the Committee that the Board of Agriculture, or some other authority, should advocate the organisation, or organise, guilds or unions of women employed on farms. While this indicates little understanding of the principles of voluntary association it does also indicate that the value of associative life is being recognised by rural women. The distinctive value of voluntary associations is that they express the inherent desire for association, that their aims and purposes express the desires which are most important to their members, and that service and loyalty are willingly given for the common good. This being the case, the Committee could not suggest that any part of the State organisation, either national or local, should attempt to foster voluntary associations. In some measure associations so organised become mere extensions of the State organisation, while the true principle of social development is that the State should become an extension of the voluntary association. The Committee are of opinion that the extension of voluntary associations amongst rural women is highly desirable; and they would not hesitate to suggest that women who are interested in any form of such association should do their utmost to establish their associations in the villages. However limited the scope of the organisation or its aims, it is always to be preferred that a woman should belong to some form of public association than that her associative life should be limited to that of the family. And it is probable that only through the growth of voluntary associations can women take their full part in the social life of their communities.

It must be pointed out, however, that certain class distinctions affect the organisation of women's associations. For instance, the wives of the more prosperous farmers, on one hand, and the field-working women (at least those who are thus normally employed), on the other, rarely become members of the Women's Institutes. And if an analogy may be drawn from men's associations it appears that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to develop one association which will cover the needs, and express the desires of all the women directly connected with the work and life of English farms. In respect of organisation for some purposes, indeed, it may be found to be preferable that women

should become members of organisations of which the membership has hitherto been practically confined to men, although no sex bar to membership has been raised. This applies particularly to organisations for economic purposes, as, for instance, agricultural co-operative societies.

129. *Women's Institutes*.—In regard to the more general functions of women in rural work and life, as in the home and the minor departments of work of the small holding and the small farm, however, it appears that one organisation with a catholic basis of membership, and a constitution which allows the pursuit of many aims, may be organised with considerable success. The Women's Institutes are to some extent supplying the need of such an organisation in the districts in which they have been established; and it is hoped that they will give increased special attention to women engaged in agriculture. It is highly important that the essential character of the institutes as voluntary associations shall be maintained. While the assistance of the State may be given as regards the financial aspects of organisation, and in the attainments of some aims which are fully recognised as a social value, especially where the institutes are engaged in tasks which have been recognised as part of the functions and responsibilities of the State (as in the provision of facilities for obtaining knowledge), the development of the general form of organisation and the policy of the institutes should be left to the members. Only on this basis will the real needs of women be expressed, and the loyalty of members secured. The Committee have been concerned with the work of the Institutes only in so far as it relates to matters which are connected with the functions of the Board of Agriculture or local authorities, or matters which may be so connected in the near future—as education and the development of rural industries. They are of opinion that some of the most important work the Institutes can do is to stimulate women to use the facilities for obtaining knowledge which already exist, but which have hitherto been inadequately used, and to urge upon local authorities the necessity of using their powers to provide facilities which hitherto have been lacking. In this connection the Committee wish to state that they have been informed that the requirements of the Institutes in the matter of instructors have not always been met, and express their emphatic opinion that when an Institute can organise a class on any subject of local educational importance in which it is within the legal power of the local authority to provide an instructor the demand should be met with reasonable promptitude. The other aspect of the work of the Institutes which appears to this Committee to be of great importance is the stimulation of mutual aid amongst women, by either informal or formal methods of co-operation. Here, again, the State has been concerned with development. In the case of formal co-operation in the agricultural industry the State has given financial aid in organisation, and this aid may be extended to societies dealing with the particular interests of women, under the usual conditions and safeguards.

The work of the Women's Institutes, however, will not be confined to the sphere of the functions and responsibilities of the Board of Agriculture and the Local Education Authorities acting in conjunction with the Board, but will be concerned with the work of other Departments, such as the Ministry of Health, and local authorities acting in conjunction therewith. This work may be of equal importance in the general life of women in rural districts to any of the Institutes' work the Committee have considered. Moreover, the ultimate value of Women's Institutes is not to be measured by the value of specific tasks accomplished, but by the extent to which they are able to create in the women of the rural districts an appreciation of the value of associative life, a realisation of what women may do for the benefit of their households and communities, and form a vehicle for the expression of the needs of rural women as felt by their members.

Apart from these general considerations it will be more convenient to state the possibilities of State action in respect of each class of woman connected with farm work.

*130. Dependants of occupiers.*—Amongst this group the wives and relatives of small holders may be included with the wives and relatives of the farmers, both large and small. Their chief need is that of greater facilities for obtaining knowledge of practical value in the work of the farms and the houses. This is more particularly true of the wives and relatives of the small holders and small farmers. Everywhere there appears amongst this class a lack of knowledge which would be helpful in some part of their work. The character of the information or experience needed varies in different localities. In one locality the need of instruction in domestic economy appears uppermost, in another the general drudgery of the work is oppressive and methods of saving labour are required. A very detailed survey would be required to discover the specific need of each locality, but the general need is for stimulus to consider ways of improving methods of work, or of obtaining better results from the work done. The specific need is shown in demands for instruction in bacon curing, or in fruit preserving, as the case may be; but the provision of facilities for teaching such subjects, which did not recognise that these demands were merely symptomatic, would not go far towards meeting the real general need. The Committee consider that domestic economy should form a part of the curricula of all farm institutes, which should be open to women, and that instruction in domestic economy should be given with special regard to the utilisation of home-grown produce and to the use of labour-saving appliances in the farm house. Steps should be taken to induce wives and intending wives of farmers to take such courses. The Local Education Authorities should also give special facilities for classes in domestic economy through the Women's Institutes. The Committee also wish to recommend that the Women's Institutes should specially encourage and inculcate ideas as to the benefit of co-operative effort in the

manufacture of produce at central village centres, and should hold demonstrations of simple labour-saving devices in central villages.

The direct results obtained from formal methods of teaching, either in institutions or through itinerant instructors, do not represent the total results of teaching, for much good accrues to a comparison of experience and methods amongst rural women, and effects of education percolate through the immediate recipients.

The work of itinerant instructors and of the Women's Institutes is of greatest importance in connection with the work and life of women on small holdings. The Committee regard the work of these women as of such high importance as factors in success that special consideration should be given to local possibilities of their education, organisation and social life.

*131. Farm servants.*—In every district in which it has been customary to employ women servants for the work of the farmhouse and yard, there is an unsatisfied demand for this type of worker. There is also a common unwillingness on the part of the class of women who have hitherto undertaken this type of service to enter it in such numbers as formerly. The problem is such that it does not readily lend itself to treatment by any public authority. It is difficult to regulate hours of labour in service of this character by statutory procedure, and although rates of wages are fixed for such part of the work as is agricultural in character there is difficulty in enforcing them. It might be possible to regulate total rates of wages, but from the evidence obtained by the Committee the rates of wages do not appear to be so great a cause of unwillingness to enter farm service as the hours of labour, the general drudgery of the work, and the loneliness of the life. Accordingly, the Committee feel that the problem is largely an internal one, for the consideration of the farmer and more especially of his wife. If they wish to procure servants in the future they must arrange the work and its attendant conditions in such a way as not to discourage women entering this employment. But it is necessary that they should receive some assistance from educational institutions in methods of re-organising work. Local demonstrations of simple labour-saving devices for the home, organised by the farm institutes for the localities in which the system of hiring women servants exists, might do much to assist the mistresses to solve part of the problem; while the education of some mistresses or intending mistresses in institutions would provide channels for the circulation of knowledge in this matter. Moreover, a number of scholarships for the best of the farm servants themselves should be established at the farm institutes for the counties in which farm servants are numerous.

There is no doubt whatever that there is much unnecessary time spent in work, partly due to bad equipment of houses and

byres, and partly due to slovenly habits of work generated by feeling that accomplishment of given tasks did not shorten the hours of labour. To remove this an entirely new spirit is required in both mistresses and servants. Mistresses should realise that they have a right to a certain amount of labour accomplished rather than to the whole of the working hours of the servant; while servants should be able to feel that the speedy accomplishment of work would not lead to the imposition of other tasks in the time set free, especially if this time is outside the proper daily amount of time given to work. The work of female farm servants, like that of stockmen, must often be done at certain stated times, as when they undertake milking and stock tending, but if the time between these tasks is equivalent to a fair day there is no reason for extending work into the late evening hours. And with work of such regularity as milking and stock tending there is every reason for the establishment of certain regular holidays, arrangements being made for the work to be done by some other member of the household or the staff.

The recognition of certain specified hours of work and leisure, besides relieving from drudgery, and very probably removing a spirit of "ca canny," would do a great deal to raise the status of the farm servant. Some efforts in this direction are urgently required. But the raising of the status of the farm servant, in the pasture farming areas, whether by the employers or through some external agency, would probably require a re-organisation of the farm work, and certainly something akin to a new spirit. It would mean a clear recognition by both parties to the contract of employment of certain amounts of labour or time which would constitute the day's or week's work; and this would necessitate acceleration of the methods of working if the farms are to be carried on with their normal staffs. The Committee are of opinion that this is not impossible, but ways and means should be considered by those responsible for agricultural education and manual training in the local areas.

Further, in view of the present shortage of women servants in the north-western and south-western counties of England and in Wales, it is relevant to indicate that some changes in the system of employment of men would improve the situation in most of the areas in which it is customary to board and lodge male farm servants in the farm houses. Part of the reason for this custom is to be found in the shortage of farm cottages, or the distance of available cottages from the farm homesteads. But the demand for female servants arises partly from the extra work in the farm house as a result of lodging male servants, and any decrease in the number of these with corresponding increase in the number of married farm workers living in their separate cottages, would relieve the situation in the farm houses. Still, where small farms prevail, and numbers of both the young men and women who are erstwhile servants hope to have farms of their own at a later stage, the servant system will remain. And as the wives of married labourers sometimes object to living in the isolated situations in which the farms are placed, there is much

to be said for the system of gathering the staff of the farm more or less under one roof. It is possible, also, that the development of systems of collecting milk for the wholesale trade or for cheese-making may affect the demand for women farm servants. But as the system of butter or cheesemaking on farms connected with the rearing of young stock is sure to continue in the outlying pasture districts the demand for female servants in these districts will also continue. With the present demands of workers, therefore, even of those who hope later to have farms of their own, the system must be adapted to the provision of leisure time, and to the provision of facilities for social intercourse outside the farm house.

Any form of social club, or of voluntary association, which could be organised for servants would help to relieve the feeling of isolation. At present, the Women's Institutes have very few members amongst the class of women servants. If they could make special efforts in the districts concerned to induce these women to join, it would be of benefit to the whole of the farming community.

Before recommending any social measures to deal with wages and hours of female farm servants, the Committee would wish that much consideration should be given by those locally concerned to methods of improving the internal working of the farm and homestead. The parties here concerned are the Local Education Authorities, the farmers, and the landowners. The Education Authorities should provide for simple trials and demonstrations of labour-saving devices. It may be that the installation of a donkey engine for the churn and wash-tub is as economic a part of the farm management as that of the engine which drives the chaff and root cutter; the farmers should consider these, and also methods of arranging for the restriction of work to certain hours (with due consideration to the requirements of the seasons). The owners of farms should very seriously consider the improvement of byres, yards and houses, with a view to curtailing unnecessary labour. While the Committee realise the difficulty of making extensive alterations in buildings, they are of opinion that small alterations and improvements intelligently conceived may have considerable effects on the utility of present equipment.

*132. Casual women workers.*—The rates of wages for these women, whether working on ordinary farms or market gardens, can, legally, be determined by the Agricultural Wages Board. But, in practice, there is considerable difficulty in this procedure, because a large amount of the work is done on the piece-rate system. There does not appear, however, to be any general abrogation of the time-rates fixed in each county in the fixing of piece-rates between employers and workers. Beyond the differential time-rates for overtime and for work before and after certain specified hours as fixed by the Agricultural Wages Board it does not appear that any regulation of hours is required in the cases of these workers. Much, if not most, of the work is seasonal, and, with the prevailing market conditions, it is essential that some of the tasks should be carried on in the

hours which are generally regarded as being outside the normal hours of farm work, as in the case of gathering and packing produce for market.

The Committee have received evidence of the value of some form of organisation of casual women workers for the work of the farm, especially in the provision of a skilled worker and good organiser to act as ganger or forewoman. While such leaders have recently been supplied by organisations established under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture, the Committee feel that this is essentially a function of the farmer. Now that the wages of the casual worker have reached a much higher level than formerly, the employment of such a woman is usually to his financial advantage, and he should be responsible for her employment. When a number of women are employed on a farm, it is sometimes preferable that they work under a woman organiser. This ganger or forewoman would receive her orders from the ordinary foreman or the farmer, whichever managed the general labour of the farm. She would be able to collect the casual women workers, to teach such of them as were inexperienced the elements of the work, and generally to carry out the immediate supervision of their labour. There are numbers of women who have been trained in the Land Army and the Women's National Land Service Corps, some of whom have been in charge of gangs, who are quite capable of supplying these requirements.

The Committee also suggest that farmers should supply shelters for women working in the fields. In the case of market gardens or farms of a similar type, where some crops on which women work are nearly always on a set of fields, a permanent shed, with a stove or facilities for fires, should be provided for a mess-room, for shelter in inclement weather, and for drying clothes. Where the women frequently move from field to field, the fields being some distance apart, such shelter might take the form of a movable hut (such as a shepherd's). Where numbers of women are employed, and are collected and distributed at the homestead, sometimes being employed there or in the vicinity, similar conveniences should be provided for meals, and for leaving baskets and clothes.

The more regular of these workers, especially those who have to support themselves, should be induced to develop their knowledge and skill in work. Consequently, wherever any demand for training in manual operations arises, either from employers or workers, Local Education Authorities should make provision for such training. But these provisions should be limited to those that the farmer could not be held responsible for in the ordinary course of employment. As previously stated, employers of young or inexperienced workers ought still to provide such training as can be given by themselves or their representatives, or by other workers they employ, in the ordinary course of the work.

Although the Committee have no definite recommendation to make, they consider that there are some possibilities of

linking up work in rural industries with casual work on the farm. The study of rural industries which the Committee were able to make was not sufficient to enable them to discuss practical details, but it appears that knowledge of local conditions would reveal opportunities for establishing industries which would be of distinct value to the casual workers and to the district at large. They are of opinion that the possibilities of such development should be studied in a few districts in which casual workers are numerous, such as Bedfordshire and Kent.

133. *Part-time milkers*.—The Committee anticipate that there will be an increased demand for this type of worker on dairy farms, and that the supply depends to some extent upon the provision which may be given for learning milking. Certain farmers who require this type of worker may be willing to teach intending milkers, but others would take to the idea more readily if a supply of trained milkers were available. Accordingly the Committee recommend that in dairying districts the Local Education Authority should organise milking classes.

As in the case of other women workers in byres and sheds, the work done by women would be facilitated by improvements in buildings. The lightening of the work induced by such changes would, in some cases at least, tend to the employment of women in the place of men, and in any case would probably lead to an increase in the total number of women employed.

134. *Full-time milkers and stock women*.—The considerations as to improvements in buildings again apply to this class, as also the considerations of the supply of convenience for meals and for drying clothes. The minimum of wages as determined for women in each county apply to these skilled workers, no special rates having been fixed for them.

The Committee are of opinion that facilities for training stock women should be given so long as the demand for their services exist. This will be best accomplished through special short courses at Farm Institutes, and some scholarships or financial assistance will be required.

135. *Skilled workers—Dairymaids and cheese makers*.—As regards wages, hours and status the position of this class of worker appear to be comparatively satisfactory. The action of public authorities, however, in relation to training greatly affects the interest of these workers. The interactions of supply and demand seem to be very close in the relation of training to both supply and demand for the skilled dairymaids and cheese makers. It is difficult to say whether the supply was more generally the cause of the demand or *vice versa*.

But this being the case, it is essential that existing facilities for training shall not be diminished while the demand continues. The Committee consider that scholarships and assisted studentships for training for skilled posts in the dairy and cheese factory should be available in sufficient numbers for those who need them. Further, this class of post should be open to the most intelligent and enterprising of the girls who enter farm service, having the

initiative later to obtain the necessary training. The posts should also be open to the daughters of small holders and small farmers; and for both the farm servant and the daughter of the small farmer some form of financial assistance for training is required.

The Agricultural Wages Board have power to fix rates of wages for these skilled dairy workers, so far as they are employed on farms, but no special rates have as yet been determined.

Evidence with regard to the prospects of employment of women cheese makers in factories is rather conflicting, but on the whole it appears that even with an extension of factories the demand for the skilled cheese maker is not likely to increase to any great extent. The general facilities for training provided for farm cheese makers and dairymaids would also meet the public obligations with regard to the training of factory cheese makers.

**136. Poultry workers.**—The work of women in poultry keeping is likely to be of growing importance, both as skilled poultry women, and on farms and small holdings where the care of poultry occupies a portion of their time only. The demand for skilled poultry women is limited, but constant, and on the whole the conditions of their employment appear to be satisfactory.

The need of this class and also of women who, among other duties, tend poultry on farms and small holdings is for better training and more opportunity to secure it. The provision for training a woman who desires to become a teacher or to manage a large commercial plant is, in the opinion of the Committee, inadequate and requires careful consideration.

The need for efficient instruction of women who are partly engaged in the care of poultry is of even greater importance in relation to the immediate increase of production. The Committee consider that the present system of instruction should be extended and supplemented by the establishment of demonstration centres and that the system of supplying stock poultry and eggs through approved stations should be continued.

## CHAPTER VIII. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

**137. Educational requirements.**—In concluding this Report, the Committee wish to call attention to the fact that all evidence laid before them tends to show that the type of women who are wanted for the economic development of agriculture are mainly the local women, relatives of men engaged in agriculture.

Of the full-time imported workers the only women who appear to be essentially required in any large number are the farm domestic servants in Wales and the North of England. Of this type there is a shortage, due mainly to the unfavourable conditions of long hours, want of status, and the isolated position of the workers, rather than to the wages and type of work.

As regards the supply of the local worker in each branch of the industry, with the exception of the part-time milker, the immediate demand appears, on the whole, to be fairly well met. This does not mean however that the existing state of affairs is satisfactory and that no recommendations are needed, for there is a vast amount of potential help which the industry requires from local women, whether they are dependents of occupiers or wage-earners, before it can reach its fullest development.

This need is expressed, not in terms of shortage of labour, but in a general absence both on the part of employer and employee of knowledge and training in methods of how to make the best and most economical use of both time and labour, and how to turn home grown products to best account whether they are for sale or home consumption.

It is here that the function of the local woman wants developing. The work of the farm home, intimately connected as it is with the agricultural industry, must be organised as highly as that of the farm itself, and woman's labour, whether in the house or on the farm, and whether of the wife or the wage-earner, must be used as economically and as efficiently as that of men.

The subject of supplying the educational requirements of this type of worker, especially those of the smallholder's wife, therefore is of greater importance than any other which has to be considered in relation to the work of women on the land. As the women in question are seldom in a position to leave their homes, the key notes of any recommendations for the most economic employment of women in agriculture are local demonstrations and itinerant instruction, local organisation of workers and such social enterprise as stimulates a demand locally for education and co-operative effort.

The whole question thus resolves itself mainly into an educational one, and for this reason, when we come to that part of our Report which deals with recommendations, we find ourselves largely covering the same ground as that of the Report of the Agricultural Education Conference on the Agricultural Education of Women, 1915. It is significant that the two enquiries having approached the subject from opposite ends, should reach similar conclusions. The Agricultural Education Conference studied the question of the requirements of women from the stand-point of agricultural education generally; this Committee has studied it from the point of view of the need for women in the economic development of agriculture. It has dealt in this Report with women's work, not as an isolated subject, but in its relation to the whole agricultural outlook. It has endeavoured to show, relatively and numerically, to what extent the past and present phases of agriculture have been dependent on women, and how the increase or decrease of particular types of farming and methods of cultivation may make greater or less demands on that help. Its aim has been to provide a broad basis of information for those who are responsible for providing facilities involving State aid for women in agriculture. The Report of the Agri-

cultural Education Conference shows what facilities exist and where there appear to be gaps in the provision of these; this Report endeavours to give the size of the problem to be dealt with, both as regards numbers and importance, and also to indicate in what particular directions education is required to fit women for that help which the agricultural industry as a whole requires of them.

138. *Importation of women.*—We do not think it necessary to advise any steps to increase by importation into rural areas the total number of women workers required. The great need is for the better education and organisation of those local workers who are available, both actually and potentially, for supplying the two-fold requirements of reserve labour at busy seasons and continuously undertaking the lighter branches of the work, including those belonging to the farmhouse. We wish, therefore, to call particular attention to those recommendations in the Report of the Agricultural Conference which deal with local and itinerant instruction, including the provision of such training facilities and scholarships as are required for turning out the larger number of teachers and demonstrators which increased local instruction may demand.

### Conclusions.

The conclusions of the Committee can be briefly summarised as follows:—

#### 139. *The supply of women workers:*

- (1) There is a large unsatisfied demand for the domestic farm servant in certain areas; this type of worker appears to be an essential factor in the economy of small hill farms of the stock-raising and dairy type.
- (2) There is a very slightly increased demand over pre-war times for full-time milkers and stock women, dairy-maids who milk, and for poultry workers.
- (3) It is likely that the demand for part-time milkers will increase substantially.
- (4) An increase in the women dependents of small-holders will naturally follow that of the men established under the Government scheme, and these women being an important factor in the success of the small-holding, every consideration should be given to all local possibilities of their education, organisation, and social life.
- (5) A demand for certain types of workers is conditional on the extension of certain branches of farming which may be encouraged by Government policy; some again, such as the casual field workers on arable farms, depend on the general condition of other trades.
- (6) The present supply of local seasonal workers in market gardens and in afforestation is likely to prove adequate: the increased demand due to any extension in the areas devoted to these branches of cultivation

during the next few years balancing the reversion of the substitution of women for men which took place during the war.

In the case of teachers of dairying similar conditions are anticipated.

**140. *The retention of local women in rural areas.***

- (7) The establishment of certain industries such as Fruit canning, Jam making, Fruit bottling and Milk drying in rural areas has caused a small demand for workers drawn from the locality. Should these undertakings spread the number of workers required would be correspondingly greater. The Committee have pointed out that this would act advantageously in retaining women in rural areas, owing to the variety of interest offered in employment. The retention of these local women is an important factor in the development of rural areas.
- (8) Further, Bacon factories and those dealing with fruit, while only offering in themselves a small demand for women's work, indirectly influence the permanent settlement of women in the district by encouraging the development of small holdings in the immediate area for the supply of their raw materials.

**Recommendations.**

**141. *Actions required.*—The specific recommendations of the Committee are the following:—**

- (1) That fuller immediate action be taken along the lines recommended by the Report of the Education Conference on the Agricultural Education of Women with regard to local instruction by County Authorities. These recommendations are:—
  - a. Itinerant instruction should take the form of organised classes rather than that of lectures, and every part of a county should be covered in a definite cycle of years.
  - b. Farm schools, or fixed courses of instruction taking their place, should be increased, so as to provide one for every county or two counties.
  - c. Domestic Economy should form part of the curriculum in every organised course.
  - d. Provision of scholarships—
    - (a) from itinerant classes to farm schools.
    - (b) from farm schools to collegiate institutions.
- (2) That the curriculum of Farm Institutes should provide special domestic economy classes dealing mainly with labour saving methods and the use and preservation of home grown produce; and that, in those areas where the system of domestic farm servants exists, the Farm Institutes should organize local demonstration classes and simple trials on the above subjects.
- (3) That a number of scholarships for the best of the farm servants themselves should be established at the Farm

- Institutes for the counties in which farm servants are numerous.
- (4) That all measures for the simplification and acceleration of methods of working in the home and byres should be considered by those responsible for agricultural education and manual training in the local areas.
  - (5) That Women's Institutes should develop as fully as possible the experiments they have begun in organising demonstrations in labour saving methods and in the various branches of household economy; and that local Education Authorities should give them every facility for classes in connection with these subjects.
  - (6) That Women's Institutes should endeavour to extend their organisation as widely as possible amongst wives of farmers and small holders and amongst farm servants.
  - (7) That the attention of farmers and landowners be directed to the desirability of improvements in byres, yards and homes with a view to curtailing unnecessary labour.
  - (8) That in dairying districts Local Education Authorities should organize milking classes.  
That Local Agricultural Associations should consider the advisability of offering prizes for women milkers at local shows.
  - (9) That short courses should be provided for training women as stock-women at Farm Institutes as long as the demand for their services exist; and that scholarships or financial assistance should be given in connection with the short courses.
  - (10) Scholarships or assisted Studentships for training for skilled posts in dairying and cheese factories should be provided so as to place these posts within the reach of the small farmer's daughter and the farm servant.
  - (11) That the recommendations of the Agricultural Education Conference as regards poultry be acted on. (These recommendations are (a) the formation at one of the existing agricultural colleges of a training course for poultry keepers, (b) the institution of a national examination in poultry in connection with the above.)
  - (12) That the present system of itinerant instruction in poultry keeping be extended and supplemented by the establishment of demonstration centres.
  - (13) That the system of supplying stock poultry and eggs through approved stations be extended.
  - (14) That demonstration centres should be established in market-gardening districts in which small-holders are numerous; and that instruction in all kinds of skilled work in connection with fruit be provided for women.
  - (15) That the duty of obtaining accurate statistics relating to women engaged in agriculture, and of maintaining adequate information upon any changes in the number of women so engaged, be urged upon the appropriate authority.

## 142. TABULAR STATEMENT OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Taking each type of industry separately the conclusions and recommendations may be tabulated as follows :—

	Types of Workers.	Type of Work.	Recommendations.	Probable Demand.
Aarable Farming ...	Seasonal Locals ...	... Hoeing, singling, root lifting, etc.	Investigation of possible connection with rural industries. Further organisation by farmers. Supply of shelter.	May increase if acreage under arable increases, and if supply of male casual workers is not increased owing to higher minimum wage. 1. Unsatisfied at present. 2. Slight increase. 3. Considerable increase.
Stock farming and dairying.	1. Domestic farm servants. 2. Full-time milkers and stockmen. 3. Part-time milkers.	Rearing and care of stock. Milk ... ... ...	Scholarships and assisted studentships for training at farm institutes. Local demonstrations in labour-saving devices by farm institutes. Education of the mistresses in labour saving in the house. Hours and status. Removal of grievances by mutual action. Better farm buildings. Organisation by the farmers of work and conditions. Supply of mess-rooms, etc.	1. Increase if factories established. 2. Slight increase. 3. Increase if factories established. 4. Stationary. 5. Slight increase. 6. — 7. Slight increase, if factories established.
Cheese-making ...	1. Farmer's wife or relative. 2. Farm servant. 3. Unskilled worker in factory. 4. Dairy teacher.	Hard and soft cheese-making (butter). Washing up, etc.	Increase in facilities for training. Local demonstrations. Scholarships.	—
Wage Earners.	5. Dairy maids. 6. Daily managers who milk on home farms, &c. 7. Assistant managers in factories.	Milking, make butter and cheese. Cheese-making ... ...	Scholarships, or financial assistance for training.	—

Tabular Statement of Conclusions—*continued.*

	Type of Workers.	Type of Work.	Recommendations.	Probable Demand.
Small Holdings ...	Small holders' relatives	Milking, care of stock (including cows, pigs and poultry), gardening, fruit growing, fruit bottling and drying, jam making, domestic work, influence over husband.	Women's institutes to arouse demand for education, especially local demonstrations of simple labour saving devices, domestic economy, etc. Development of co-operative spirit. (Regard women here as of such high importance as factors in success that special consideration should be given to the local possibilities of their education, organisation and social life).	Determined by number of holdings. May also be affected by rates of wages of hired labour.
Poultry ...	Occupiers. Managers or assistants. Teachers.	All work connected with poultry stock. Development of local demonstrations.	Itinerant instruction. Demonstrations. Supply of stocks.	Scope for increased production. Demand partly dependent upon increase in small holdings. Demand for local demonstrators.
Market gardening, hops and fruit growing.	<i>Large holdings:</i> local seasonals. Imported pickers <i>Small holdings:</i> occupiers	Weeding, picking, bunching, etc. Picking fruit ... ...	As in the case of local seasonals in arable farming. Local demonstrations and itinerant instruction. Supply of stocks.	Dependent upon acreage under fruit. Dependent upon number of holdings and wages of hired labour. Dependent upon acreage. No demand for imported labour in factories. Little if any extension.
Flax ...	Local seasonals; local factory workers.	Weeding and harvesting. Factory work and helping in harvesting. Lining out, planting, nursery work. Hoeing, weeding, singeing and lifting roots.	As in the case of arable farming	Increased, if industry develops.
Afforestation ...	Local seasonals. A few trained foremen. Local seasonals ...	... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...	Ordinary factory work.	None ... ... ... ...
Beet sugar ...	Factory workers	Mostly urban factory women.	Some in fruit plantations.	Very small.
Jam making ...	Some rural women in small factories, in fairly regular work.	... ... ... ... ...	Very little, if any extension.	...

Fruit canning	...	Rural women — mostly employed regularly. Local seasonals ...	Factory work — making tins, packing tins, etc., Picking fruit in season.	—	—	Small, if industry develops.
Fruit pulping	...	Local seasonals ...	Picking fruit in season.	—	None, as regards factory work.	
Fruit bottling	...	Local seasonals ...	Fruit picking ...	...		
Village women *	...	Village women *	Fruit picking.	—		
Dry pea picking and packing.		Local village women, and some urban factory women.	Sorting peas by hand, and packing in cartons.	—	* Might be encouraged by women's institutes in village depots.	Very small.
Vegetable drying ...		Women in market gardens.	—	—	None, as regards factory work.	No extension.
Potato flour and farina manufacture.		Women connected with potato growing only. (Factory women in towns.)	Potato field work ...	—	None, as regards factory work.	
Bacon curing	...	Urban women in factories; in some areas, village women in factories.	Sausage skin making; making sausages; making pies; sometimes making cases; washing carcasses.	—	Very little in villages. The industry affects small holdings in neighbourhoods.	
Milk drying	...	Mostly urban women. Some from villages.	Filling, labelling and packing bottles.	—	Very slight.	
Rural industries ...		Village women in workrooms; home workers.	According to industry ...	—	Survey of possibilities of connecting rural industries with casual work on farms.	
Osier growing	...	Village casual ...	weeding ; peeling rods...	—	No extension.	

## APPENDICES.

## I.—RELATION OF SIZE OF FARMS AND PROPORTION OF PASTURE LAND TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF FARMERS' FEMALE RELATIVES.

Division and County.	Average Size of all Holdings.	Proportion of Pasture to Total Area.	Ratio to 1,000 Farmers. Farmers' Female Relatives.
<i>Div. I. A.:</i>			
Bedford	64	43	120
Huntingdon	80	41	116
Cambridge	71	33	99
" Isle of Ely	54	33	
Suffolk, E.	84	28	
" W.	99	22	137
Essex	84	35	94
Hertford	88	38	95
Middlesex	45	72	147
London	35	68	46
<i>Div. I. B.:</i>			
Norfolk	77	27	131
Lincoln, Holland	45	26	
" Easteven	92	37	156
" Lindsey	71	36	
Yorks, E. R.	89	34	261
<i>Div. II. A.:</i>			
Kent	66	59	107
Surrey	54	61	119
Sussex, E.	65	71	
" W.	84	73	129
Berkshire	88	49	121
Hampshire	70	41	
" Isle of Wight	68	57	140
<i>Div. II. B.:</i>			
Nottingham	64	51	173
Leicester	63	80	154
Rutland	94	63	142
Northampton	98	70	
" Soke of Peterboro'	62	49	118
Buckingham	73	67	111
Oxford	93	52	109
Warwick	68	73	159
<i>Div. III. A.:</i>			
Salop	62	69	244
Worcester	46	68	172
Gloucester	66	67	173
Wiltshire	103	63	131
Monmouth	51	86	247
Hereford	69	72	205
<i>Div. III. B.:</i>			
Somerset	60	81	261
Dorset	89	67	210
Devon	70	59	363
Cornwall	48	46	303
<i>Div. IV. A.:</i>			
Northumberland	120	74	333
Durham	63	67	341
Yorks, N.R.	66	63	314
" W.R.	45	70	205
<i>Div. IV. B.:</i>			
Cumberland	71	65	419
Westmorland	72	84	438
Lancaster	41	68	351
Chester	44	63	373
Derby	43	82	248
Stafford	49	74	246

## II.—WOMEN IN FARM WORK.

*The Result of Enquiry issued to Employers.*

Number of Forms sent out, 480, viz.:—

Representatives of Employers on Agricultural Wages Board	...	...	354
Per County Agricultural Organisers, Berks	...	...	14
Per County Agricultural Organisers, Oxon	...	...	14
Per County Agricultural Organisers, Cumberland	...	...	30
Per County Agricultural Organisers, Northampton and Isle of Ely	...	...	26
Per County Agricultural Organisers, Wilts	...	...	12
Per Women's National Land Service Corps	...	...	30
			480

Total number of replies received to April 2nd, 1919, 368.

Bedfordshire	...	...	5	Middlesex	...	...	...	7
Berks	...	...	15	Norfolk	...	...	...	13
Bucks	...	...	10	Northamptonshire	...	...	...	19
Cambridgeshire	...	...	11	Northumberland	...	...	...	2
Cheshire	...	...	6	Nottinghamshire	...	...	...	7
Cornwall	...	...	10	Oxon	...	...	...	17
Cumberland	...	...	45	Rutland	...	...	...	1
Derbyshire	...	...	5	Shropshire	...	...	...	7
Devonshire	...	...	7	Somerset	...	...	...	8
Dorset	...	...	8	Staffordshire	...	...	...	4
Essex	...	...	9	Suffolk	...	...	...	6
Gloucestershire	...	...	7	Surrey	...	...	...	6
Hampshire	...	...	9	Sussex	...	...	...	3
Herefordshire	...	...	5	Warwickshire	...	...	...	3
Hertfordshire	...	...	14	Westmorland	...	...	...	6
Huntingdonshire	...	...	3	Wilts	...	...	...	11
Kent	...	...	16	Worcestershire	...	...	...	8
Lancashire	...	...	9	Yorkshire	...	...	...	10
Leicestershire	...	...	7	Wales	...	...	...	24
Lincolnshire	...	...	5					

*Analysis of Replies.*

Total forms sent out, 480. Total replies received, 368.

(1) Did you employ women before the War ?	Yes.	127
	No.	197
	No reply	44
(2) Have you employed them during the War ?	Yes.	345
	No.	18
	No reply	5
(3) To what capacity have you employed them ?		
Milking	...	12
Dairy work	...	1
Milking, stock and field work	...	120
Milking and stock	...	14
Milking, stock, field and poultry	...	2
Milking, stock, field and horse work	...	2
Milking and field work	...	48
Milking and garden	...	3
Stock and field work	...	13
Field work	...	99
Field work and sheep	...	3
Field work and garden	...	8
Field and horse work	...	2
Field work and forestry	...	2
Harvest only	...	3
Garden market	...	3
Garden	...	3
Garden and horse work	...	1
Potato lifting	...	1
Glass houses	...	1
Horse work	...	1
Tractor work	...	1
No reply	...	2
(4) Was their work satisfactory ?	Yes.	220
	No.	26
	Fairly or partly	118
	No reply	4
(5) Were the women local or imported ?	Local	157
	Imported	93
	Both kinds	95
	No reply	13
(6) Were the women whole or part-time workers ?	Whole	134
	Part	77
	Both	123
	No reply	34
(7) Do you anticipate a larger demand for Women's labour after the War than before the War ?	Yes.	156
	No.	117
	Doubtful	27
	No reply	68

**III.—FEMALE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS, 1911.\***  
*(Return issued to House of Commons, March, 1915.)*

County.	No. of Female Agricul- tural Labourers Census 1911.	Grand Total Male and Female Agricul- tural Labourers Census 1911.	Percentage of Females to Grand Total.	Average Weekly Earnings of all Agricultural Labourers (without board and lodging) in 1907. (Board of Trade Enquiry re earnings and hours of labour, 1906.) (Cd. 5460.)
				s. d.
Bedford ...	47	9,431	.49	17 5
Berkshire ...	116	10,512	1.10	17 9
Buckingham ...	92	11,178	.82	17 9
Cambridge ...	468	19,487	2.40	17 2
Chester ...	433	14,813	2.49	19 9
Cornwall ...	158	10,524	1.50	18 5
Cumberland ...	191	6,593	2.89	20 5
Derby ...	107	7,811	1.37	21 1
Devon ...	326	21,501	1.52	18 1
Dorset ...	174	10,784	1.62	16 6
Durham ...	690	6,312	10.93	22 9
Essex ...	402	32,336	1.24	17 7
Gloucester ...	145	14,052	1.03	17 6
Hants and Isle of Wight	202	18,528	1.09	18 1
Hereford ...	152	8,810	1.73	17 11
Hertford ...	126	11,127	1.13	18 3
Huntingdon ...	96	6,335	1.51	17 2
Kent ...	1,357	32,948	4.12	19 4
Lancashire ...	494	20,446	2.42	21 7
Leicester ...	56	8,137	.69	19 7
Lincoln ...	607	38,332	1.59	19 3
Middlesex ...	242	1,011	5.59	20 10
Monmouth ...	31	3,229	.96	19 1
Norfolk ...	351	35,857	.99	16 6
Northampton ...	68	12,986	.52	17 10
Northumberland ...	1,864	8,084	22.07	21 10
Nottingham ...	76	9,429	.80	20 6
Oxford ...	62	11,663	.53	16 11
Rutland ...	9	1,525	.59	17 10
Shropshire ...	247	13,497	1.83	18 10
Somerset ...	355	17,944	1.99	17 8
Stafford ...	159	12,460	1.28	19 4
Suffolk ...	166	29,668	.56	16 7
Surrey ...	188	10,212	1.84	9 9
Sussex ...	156	20,538	.76	18 9
Warwick ...	83	10,744	.77	16 6
Westmorland ...	52	2,178	2.39	21 8
Wilts ...	159	16,833	.95	16 9
Worcester ...	216	11,452	1.89	17 2
Yorkshire:—				
E. Riding ...	180	13,256	1.36	20 1
N. Riding ...	173	11,707	1.48	20 6
W. Riding ...	531	19,977	2.67	20 11

\* While the Committee realise that these figures are now out of date, and at best are somewhat misleading, they are included in an endeavour to bring together the statistics relating to the subject.

IV.—NUMBER OF WOMEN WORKING ON MARKET GARDENS, 1918.  
(Exclusive of L.A.A.S.)

ENGLAND.	August, 1918.	Nov., 1918.	Feb., 1918.
Bedfordshire ... ... ... ...	748	331	167
Berkshire ... ... ... ...	184	41	90
Birmingham, City of ... ... ...	50	—	—
Bucks ... ... ... ...	207	27	71
Cambs ... ... ... ...	266	327	132
Cheshire ... ... ... ...	200	140	159
Cornwall ... ... ... ...	—	87	87
Cumberland ... ... ... ...	—	80	55
Derby ... ... ... ...	328	32	40
Devon ... ... ... ...	775	349	394
Dorset ... ... ... ...	70	94	73
Durham ... ... ... ...	—	175	175
Essex ... ... ... ...	811	361	319
Gloucester ... ... ... ...	—	211	119
Hants ... ... ... ...	685	582	447
Hereford ... ... ... ...	58	13	13
Hertford ... ... ... ...	162	239	89
Hunts ... ... ... ...	230	114	95
Isle of Ely ... ... ... ...	188	183	111
Isle of Wight ... ... ... ...	49	—	48
Kent, East ... ... ... ...	498	424	36
Kent, West ... ... ... ...	567	385	238
Lancashire ... ... ... ...	219	316	85
Leicester ... ... ... ...	85	56	34
Lincs. (Holland) ... ... ... ...	965	200	481
Lincs. (Kesteven) ... ... ... ...	20	27	17
Lincs. (Lindsey) ... ... ... ...	124	204	19
Middlesex ... ... ... ...	1,103	40	224
Norfolk ... ... ... ...	2,947	2,345	1,755
Northampton ... ... ... ...	249	265	173
Northumberland ... ... ... ...	274	274	274
Notts. ... ... ... ...	130	68	100
Oxford ... ... ... ...	96	64	48
Rutland ... ... ... ...	42	37	19
Salop ... ... ... ...	120	112	45
Soke of Peterborough ... ... ...	—	—	—
Somerset ... ... ... ...	—	69	126
Staffs ... ... ... ...	89	50	77
Suffolk East ... ... ... ...	259	205	75
Suffolk West ... ... ... ...	—	12	—
Surrey ... ... ... ...	381	390	188
Sussex East ... ... ... ...	47	314	150
Sussex West ... ... ... ...	—	86	136
Warwick ... ... ... ...	168	148	144
Westmorland ... ... ... ...	—	6	9
Wilts ... ... ... ...	405	437	260
Worcester ... ... ... ...	201	42	576
Yorks, East Riding ... ... ... ...	13	17	17
Yorks, North Riding ... ... ... ...	8	10	10
Yorks, West Riding ... ... ... ...	106	51	28
TOTAL ENGLAND ...	14,137	10,085	8,028
<hr/>			
WALES.			
Anglesey ... ... ... ...	30	47	38
Brecon ... ... ... ...	—	4	5
Cardigan ... ... ... ...	—	—	—
Carmarthen ... ... ... ...	60	40	40
Carnarvon ... ... ... ...	120	124	106
Denbighshire ... ... ... ...	68	9	141
Flint ... ... ... ...	14	14	79
Glamorgan ... ... ... ...	91	65	84
Merioneth ... ... ... ...	—	2	22
Montgomery ... ... ... ...	—	29	29
Monmouth ... ... ... ...	55	50	89
Pembroke ... ... ... ...	10	18	18
Radnor ... ... ... ...	—	—	2
TOTAL WALES ...	448	402	653
TOTAL ENGLAND AND WALES ...	14,585	10,487	8,681

## V.—RETURNS OF MARKET GARDENERS, 1911.

Census of population, 1911, gives:—

Male Market Gardeners.	Employers	...	...	...	5,481
	Labourers	...	...	...	19,185
Female ,,, ,,	Employers	...	...	...	375
	Labourers	...	...	...	1,439

Census of population, 1911. Administrative county areas gives:—

Market gardeners, including labourers:—

			Men.	Women.
Bedford	...	...	1,681	34
Cambridge	...	...	413	26
Cheshire	...	...	1,143	196
Cornwall	...	...	846	54
Devon	...	...	1,169	76
Essex	...	...	1,140	37
Gloucester	...	...	1,276	42
Hampshire	...	...	1,653	43
Kent	...	...	1,465	85
Lancashire	...	...	1,286	187
Middlesex	...	...	1,734	328
Norfolk	...	...	1,168	45
Somerset	...	...	985	57
Suffolk	...	...	460	23
Surrey	...	...	879	62
Sussex, East	...	...	637	7
,, West	...	...	992	12
Wilts	...	...	511	9
Worcester	...	...	3,268	204
Yorkshire, East Riding	...	...	590	60
,, West ,,	...	...	1,288	89

The remainder of the English counties and the whole number of Welsh counties do not return any men or women as "Market" gardeners, though all have certain returns under the heading of Nurserymen and Seedsmen

## VI.—WOMEN'S WAGES AT THE VARIOUS DATES.

(Prepared by Miss GLADYS POTT.)

*Table of Estimates of Wages taken from Various Sources.*

Date.	Amount of Woman's Wage.	Authority.
15th Century	1s. to 1s. 6d. per week ... ... ... 3s. in harvest time ... ... ...	Thorold Rogers. "Six Centuries of Work and Wages."
1860	4s. 2d. per week ... ... ...	Ditto
1884	6s. 0d. " ... ... "	Ditto
1885-86	1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per day, Northumberland. 3s. harvest 6s. per week with some food, Cheshire 1s. 6d. per day, Westmorland 4s. 6d. to 5s. per week, Wilts 5s. 0d. to 6s. " " Hants 5s. 0d. " " Gloucester 4s. 6d. " " or } Hereford 1s. 0d. " day, } 6s. 0d. " week, Worcestershire (double in harvest). 7s. 6d. " West Kent 1s. to 1s. 3d. " day, Sussex 9d. " " } Essex 4s. 0d. " week, } 8d. to 10d. " day, Suffolk 7s. 6d. " week, Northampton 9s. 0d. " day, } Lincolnshire 1s. 2d. " day, } 10d. " " Warwickshire 6s. 0d. " week, Cambridge	" The Agricultural Labourer," by Kebbel. Figures taken from the Royal Commission on Agricultural Labour, 1867, 1869, and 1887.
1902-3	1s. 3d. per day, Kent 1s. to 1s. 2d. per day, Surrey 1s. to 1s. 3d. " " Warwick 10d. to 1s. 3d. " " Essex 9d. to 10d. " " Dorset 9d. to 10d. " " Wilts. 9d. to 10d. " " Herts. 1s. 6d. " " Westmorland	Royal Commission on Labour, 1893.
1902.	Dairy-maids living in Shropshire £6 to £16 per year.	Ditto
1902.	Table of Wages quoted in Westmorland for experienced maids and servants who lived in. 1882 £10. 1888 £8 to £11. 1889 £10 to £11. 1890 £12 to £14. 1891 £14. 1892 £11 to £12.	Ditto
	Women's Daily Wage in Westmorland 1882 1s. 3d. (harvest 3s.) per day 1884 1s. 4d. " " 1886 1s. 4d. " " 1890 1s. 6d. " "	Ditto

*Table of Wages extracted from "Returns of Wages."*  
 (Published between 1830 and 1886," C. 5172/1887.)

## WOMEN'S WAGES, 1861.

Weekly.

	Time.				Piece.	
	1860.		1861.			
	s.	d.	s.	d.		
Bedford	5	0	March			
Berks ...	3	0 to 5	6 to 5	0	5 3	
Bucks ...	No return.					
Cambridge	4	0 to 5	0	4	0 to 7 0	
Chester	6	0	6	0		
Cornwall	3	0	3	0		
Cumberland	4	0	9	0		
Derby ...	No return.					
Devon ...	2	6 to 4	6	3	0 to 4 0	
Dorset ...	3	0	8	0		
Durham	3	4	6	2	5 0	
Essex ...	4	0	5	0		
Gloucester	3	6	5	0		
Hampshire	4	6	6	0	7 6 to 12 0	
Hereford	4	0	5	0		
Hertford	2	0	3	6		
Huntingdon	3	6	4	0		
Kent ...	6	0	8	0		
Lancashire	4	0	10	0	4 9 , 11 0	
Leicester	4	0	6	0		
Lincoln	6	0	7	0		
Middlesex ...	No return.					
Monmouth	2	6 to 6	0	2	6 , 6 0	
Norfolk	2	0	4	6	4 0 to 9 0	
Northampton	4	0	7	6		
Northumberland	3	8	7	0		
Nottingham	6	0		6	0	
Oxon ...	No return.					
Rutland	3	0 to 4	0	4	0	
Shropshire	3	4	4	6		
Somerset	3	0	4	6		
Stafford	5	0	5	6		
Suffolk	3	6	6	0		
Surrey ...	3	9	5	3		
Sussex ...	3	0	6	0	5 0 to 12 0	
Warwick	2	6	3	6		
Westmorland	7	6	10	0		
Wilts ...	3	0	5	0		
Worcester	3	6	5	0		
Yorkshire :—						
W. Riding ...	3	0	9	0	6 0	
N. Riding ...	3	0	7	6	4 0 to 6 0	









